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THE HISTORY OF MADISON COUNTY, ALABAMA

with

an autobiographical sketch

by

Thomas Jones Taylor

The Manuscript was written in Huntsville from 1880 to 1936

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MADISON COUNTY

The first white person who claimed the territory including Madison County by purchase were the members of the Tennessee Land Company desiring their claim from a cession of the Georgia Legislature of 1795-6 General Oglethorpes charter from the British Government included all Mississippi and Alabama except portions south of the 31st. Parallel of latitude which was claimed by Spain. The United States based its claim to this Territory on the following grounds, 1st. that when Georgia surrendered all right to jurisdiction of the Territory beyond the limit of Georgia Colony property being the present state of Georgia and the Territory of Ala. and Mississippi reverted to the crown and was ceded to the United States in the treaty of 1783, but Georgia claims that the war left the States separate and sovereign and as the result of the war Georgia was left in possession of the Territory. To the Mississippi river no Virginia retained title in the great northwestern Territory. These question involved rights of the States and the extent of state sovereignty but were amicably settled by Legislation and compromise. The United States while claiming jurisdiction and control of the Indian Territory in the limits of the treaty of 1783 yet acknowledged the right of the Indians aboriginas occupants of their territory and this title the Government extinguished by purchase and conquest. But before the Indians titles were extinguished and while Georgia claimed this territory certain corporations were formed in the state of Georgia that induced the Georgia Legislature to sell them the Territory including nearly all of the States of Ala. and Miss. and as Madison County was included in this purchase and as the subject is and interesting one showing as it does that such enterprises and the means of accomplishment has not been completed to the present era of ----------

fraud and corruption I propose to give a brief outline of those transactions known in the day as the Yazoo Land Frauds which caused great excitement and indignation among the people of Georgia. There were three of these companies known as the Georgia, the Tennessee, and the Yazoo or Lower Mississippi land companies but as several of the parties belonged to all three of the companies and the methods adopted identical, I shall confine myself to the action of the Tennessee land Co. that purchased North Al. stating however, that the cession to the three companies embraced nearly all of the present States of Alabama and Mississippi. On the beginning of the year 1796 Zachoriah Lease, Michael Baker and others formed the Tenn. Land Co. and proposed to purchase from the State of Georgia the lands from the Tennessee line South to 34010 N latitude and running from the head waters of Bear Creek one hundred and twenty miles embracing the greater portion of present N Al.. on the day of January 1796. The bill making the cession passed the lower branch of the Georgia Legislature by a vote 19 to 9 and next day passed the Senate by a vote of ten to eight received their signature of Gov. Matthews and became a law. The act of the Legislature making this cession set for the right of the State to this domain and declared the purpose of this sale to be the payment of the late State Troops and for other purposes and for the better protection of the frontier and for other purposes. The passage of this bill created great indignation throughout the State and it was openly charged that its passage was effected by bribery and corruption and when the Legislature of 1796-7 convened a committee was appointed to investigate this matter. The committee of which James Jackson was Chairman after taking evidence in the case made the following report.

"Resolved, that all such proofs relating to the "Fraud and corruption practiced to obtain the act for "The disposal of the western Territory of this State be entered by the clerk on the journals of the house in order that the testimony so taken may be perpetuated as well for the satisfaction of the Legislature and to show----------

grounds on which they proceeded as to hand down to future Legislatures the vile means by which the rights of the people were attempted to be bastored away and this report was adopted by the Legislature.

Although the preceeding Legislature was so severly rebuked and this whole transaction repudiated as a fraud of the Legislature of 97, yet these land companies holding a deed under the seal and signature of Gov. Matthews did not relinquish their claim but bought, sold and conveyed these lands until the year 1810. When Georgia ceded these lands to the general government in 1802 and the United States began to exercise ownership over them these companies memonalyed Congress for relief, Georgia sent up the papers of the committee which show conclusively the fraud and corruption practiced and in March 1803 the Secretary of State, Secretary of Treasurer, and Attorney General were appointed a committee to adjust these claims. After the repudiation of this sale by the State of Georgia many of the parties released their claims on the lands and whatever money had been paid by them to the State of Georgia was refunded by the act of 1803 proof of purchase was required to be plied in the land offices except to parties claiming in lands belonging to the Indians whose title had not been extinguished but by legislature at different periods the tribe of filing claim was extended as late as January 1815 while these land companies did not realize their magnificent scheme for riches and power, yet they probably made a great deal of money by their enterprize. On March 31st. 1814 Congress appropinated the sum of six hundred thousand dollars to identify the purchases from the Tennessee Land Company which was distributed prorata among the claimants. Each claimant received a certificate of Mississippi Stock to be paid out of the proceeds of the sles of land in Mississippi Territory which certificates were receivable for public lands in proportion of ninety five dollars stock and five dollars cash on the hundred dollars. All claims under these land companies filed to January 1815 where the purchases money had not been refunded by the State of Georgia were so adjusted and all claims of like character not filed at that time were made void and----------

[illegible] grants ejected in some instances by the Military and in the year 1815 the United States had perfected their title to all these lands.

Indian Cessions in Madison County---

When Georgia ceded Mississippi Territory to the United States in 1802 Madison County was the property of the Cherokees and Chickasaws. This boundry between these tribes was by consent of these tribes established and surveyed about the year 1805 from the mouth of Duck River on an agreed line southward to a point on Tennessee River as surveyed about three miles below the foot of Chickamaw (now Gotts Island). The Cherokees buying East and the Cherokees west of the boundry. In the year 1807 the Cherokees relinquished all the territory to the United States west of a line from head of Chickasaws Island northwardly with Cumberland Ridge to include the low waters of Elk River. All of the Territory between the same last line and the old Cherokees Boundary, south of the state of Tennessee formed the original County of Madison. It was of a triangular shape fronting on Tennessee River on the south about three miles and with the Tennessee line on the North about thirty miles and included what is now the north east corner of Limestone County from Pettusville, eastwardly to present county line and coming to a point just north of D. C. Davis place from Davis place this line ran N. 30:30 W. and crossed Indian Creek north of Dr. Slaughters and passed through Matthews Donelson, Pennells Watkins, Norton's and Lacey's plantations to Tennessee river. The eastern boundary of the old county went from the river at S.W. corner of Dr. Lowes place on Tennessee river on a direct line N 48:30 W. to the top of Keels Mountain S of Guilfords Harnette crossing. Flint river north of F. O. Carpenters place. From Keels mountain the line turns more to the north and from Mayville to New Market is very crooked making many angles and deflections and passes about one mile east of both Mayville and New Market and after it crosses Mountain fork it runs at an angle of about N. 12, W. until it intersects the Tennessee line on the north boundary of Sec. 3 T 1 R 2 East. The county this lost out contained about 370,000 acres or a little over five hundred square miles. In the year 1817 this was relinquished with other land the southern portion of this County [illegible]

d in 1815 the present bound ry of Limestone and Madison was established. The western
rtion or New Madison was ceeded by the Cherokees about the same time and in 1819
Madison County was established including all N of the Indian Line to where it crosses
. O. Carpenters from which Flint River was made the County line to its mouth. In
1 Decatur County was established between Madison and Jackson but it was abolished
think in the year 1834 and the present line established between Madison and Jackson,
ing defined to be the dividing ridge between the waters of Flint and Paint Rock, it is
ry irregular in its course and I have never seen it properly drawn on any map. It was
fficially established by the County Surveyors, Jno. T. Jones of Madison and Walker
Hutcheon of Jackson in the year 1848 and there is scarcely a citizen in either county
hat knows anything about it today. From the N Boundary of T. 3 R 2 E it follows the
ngo line until it strikes the twelve mile square line on Keels mountain and follows it
Paint Rock which is its boundary to Tennessee river.

CENTLEMENT

It is fashionable now as it has been in all ages to deplore the degeneracy of the pre-
sent generation and land the virtues of our forefathers. It is a sad fact that war and its
attendant vices have lowered the moral standard, but the history of the Georgia Land
Companies composed of men of the highest political and social position the ancestors of
governors and senators and congressmen furnish an illustration of the fact that virtue
and vice is common to every age and country and that a man of a century or of centuries
ago was swayed and controlled by about the same influences as is the man of today. In
all ages there have been men gifted with the valent to originate and the persistence to
carry into execution the great enterprises that have given to the world what we call pro-
gress, and when the talents of such men have been exercised in developing national pros-
perity and in the suffering of humanity, they have been among the great benefactors of
the human race. But then ambition and avarice and a lust for riches and power have been
the controlling motive then the few flourished at the expense of the many and monopolies
dangerous to liberty are established. But in all time no monopoly or prescription of right
has ever become so strong or so sacred as to withstand the wrath of the masses when
they [illegible] to repress an evil that has become odious and intolerable. So it was in
the state of Georgia, the people rose against this monopoly and crushed it in its bud but
then it took nearly twenty years to eliminate these great corporatives. The motive that
actuated the originators of----------

these schemes are not clearly known. Many of them had fought in the war of the revolution and bore high reputation as honorable men and true republicans whether it was intended as a more money making scheme or to open this vast territory to settlement and protect the frontier by forcing the Indian backward towards the Mississippi, is an unsettled question. We know that these old frontiersmen were of heroic strain and had known and experienced much sufferin from Indian depredation and in the Indian wars and that they had little idea of an Indian rights and it is probable that they intended to assert their rights by force of arms and it is a possible fact that the failing of their schemes averted a great deal of blood shed. This land was divided into Townships and the Townships into lots of one thousand acres each, and were placed in the market. The original holders had to pay about two and three fourth cents per acres each and a stockholders share in the future sales of the company. The portions sold in this County seemed to have been in Townships eight and nine but how many of these thousand acres lots made a township I have not been able to ascertain. At the time of the survey and sale of the public lands in this county in 1809 many tracts had been sold by this company. About the oldest of which was the sale of a tract of one thousand acres including the town of Huntsville to one Martin Beatty in the year 1808 for the sum of one thousand dollars. Conveyances were likewise made to Freeman Jones 450 acres William Campbell 640 acres, Gideon Harrison 800 acres, Daniel and Joseph Harrison 800 acres and to Henry Cheffy ten thousand acres all of which sales were made at the rate of one dollar per acre. The last sale recorded was to Martin Beatty and Benjamin Estell ofaforty acre tract from which were accepted some of the above named lots leaving about thirty four thousand acres sold at one dollar per acre. This tract commenced one mile and a quarter west of the mouth of Flint River and ran north passing about two miles east of Huntsville and coming on Flint River east of Meridianville there running west nearly four miles thence south to a point west of Huntsville, thence east four miles, three south and a quarter mile thence south to the river. This last deed was made by the Co. in 1811 after this land had been sold at Go v. sale and probably was compromised in the manner already described.

Some of the deeds here alluded to mentioned that the parties resided on the l[illegible] and about the year 1805 Isaac Criner settled near New Market and with his brother Joseph Criner is said to have built the first cabin erected in the county then S[illegible]amuel Davis and Stephon McBroom in same neighborhood and John Hunt at Huntsville Spring and old John McCarter and old Indian trader west of Hazel Green came here near the same date. The early settlers were so scattered and saw so little of each other that it is difficult to ascertain who came first. Old man Isaac Criner who died some four or five years ago at the age of ninety three or four said that he and his brother had put up his brothers cabin when John Hunt stayed all night with him on his way to Huntsville Spring and his brothers wife baked bread for him and David Bean to bring with them that htis was in the fall of 1804 and that Bean helped Hunt put up a cabin and then Bean came back and settled on Beans creek near Salem, Tennessee and Hunt went to east Tennessee after his family and returned returned with them in the spring of 1805. If there were any other settlers in the County in the spring of 1805 except those mentioned Mr. Criner had not heard of them. This is the substance of the statement. Mr. Criner made to me and has often made to others and as he was a man of remarkable memory and undoubted veracity I am disposed to give his statement credit. I do not think there is any doubt of John Hunts being the pioneer in the settlement of Huntsville, yet I think it quite probable there were several settlers in the county who came here about this time. The settlement in Tenn. in 1805 had reached down to Elk River in the neighborhood of Winchester and several of the old pioneers claimed to have come across the line into this county in this county in the year 1805, but taking Mr. Criner and Mr. Hunt as the original pioneers there was this difference in their career. Mr. Criner came here before he attained his majority, settled in a remote corner of the county stayed at home and worked hard and when he died left a large body of the lands near where he settled to his children. John Hunt came here in the full meridian of life with very little of this worlds good and the lands at the public sales brought prices beyond his reach and became the property of richer men and all that he received of the vast domain on which he was the first to settle was a hole here [illegible]

lot in the city that bears his name and a name that will be remembered as long as the city of Huntsville marks the place where he built his cabin and commenced to battle with the wilderness. We generally make considerable allowance for tales of the olden time but to the man who is now intimately acquainted with Madison and has closely studied its topography and who makes proper allowances for seventy years wear and tear their growing pictures of the wonderous facility of this county will not seem exaggeratted and that when first settled it must have been one of the most desirable countries ever trodden by the footsteps of men. The old settlers tell us there was an abundance of fish and game our creeks and rivers were as clear as crystal in which trout, and sea horse perch and salmon literially swarmed. The woods were full of squirrels, pigeons, and wild turkeys. Bear and deer were abundant. In winter the lakes and sloughs teemed with wild geese and ducks that fattened on the abundant mast along our waters. The lands once cleared with very little labor generous support to man and beast. Our winters were mild and forest food so abundant that cattle and hogs thrived with very little care. The country was healthy, water abundant and of the very finest quality. Even who never visited them but at the beginning of each year they could safely calculate the result of the coming years toil. This so seldom failed in their crops that a good crop was almost a matter of certainty. Another proof of the truth of these statements is in that day unprecedented emigration to the new region from 1805 to 1809 a population of four thousand had come here in 1816 there were ten thousand white and four thousand two hundred colored in the county and in 1820 our population had reached 1900 white and colored and the county was making about ten thousand bales of cotton a year. In the year 1808 Madison County was originated and in 1809 the lands in the old county were surveyed and put upon the market. And I will take up the settlement as it was in 1809 and will in the history of the and sales be enable to give some idea of the settlements at that time.

Survey and Sale of Lands------

In 1809 the population of four thousand in the county were all in the limits of old Madison as all the rest was Indian territory and the squatter who got over

this line was arrested and brought back by the soldiers, his cabin burned, his cattle confiscated and his corn cut down. At this time there was a kind of rough road they not regularly opened from here to the Tennessee line and a point was selected on the Tennessee to start a basis Meridian that would pass through or near Huntsville. This line is said to have been established by Thomas Freeman and Pharoah Roach who took the contract to survey Old Madison. They made a return of the survey in May 1809 and it was approved by Both Peire, General surveyor. I do not know whether they used a transit or the odolite but as there is nothing showing such an instrument to have been in use I am of the impression that the Meridian was established by a vernier compass, and instrument with which those old pioneers did remarkably accurate work. Thomas Freeman did the greater portion of the work and we have since found out that both his work and Roache was remarkably well done. There was one production of our mountains that I was about to overlook I mean the rattlesnakes that were numerous and of the largest size, even down to the year 1825 we see in a correspondence of return, J. Meigs with the secretary of war he suggested the survey of certain Indian reservations in the early spring because rattlesnakes are so numerous and venomous in the late summer and early Autumn months. The lands at that time were surveyed into quarter sections the smallest amount that could be offered in truth none but the section lines were run and section corners established the sectional subdivisions being left to be made by County surveyors at cost of the owners. The lands were offered for sale to the highest bidder at Nashville on 1st. Monday in August 1820 and the sale lasted for four weeks. The minimum price was fixed at two dollars per acre of which the purchaser paid three dollars cash for each quarter section or five dollars for each section to pay surveying expenses, one fourth of the remainder in forty days on penalty of forfeiture of purchase the rest in one, two and three years with interest from day of sale. Those who paid cash were allowed a discount of

[illegible] per cent on deferred payments. Cash purchasers at the minimum time paid about $1.75 per acre, while those who purchased on time paid about $2.16 per acre. Large tracts were purchased by speculators most prominent among whom

were LeRoy Pope, John Brahon, Samuel Allen. Many old settlers who occupied public lands were outbid by capitalists and lost their property and were compelled to enter cheaper tracts. LeRoy Pope entered five and John Brahon one of the quarter sections on which Huntsville stands, for which it is said they paid ten dollars per acre. The date of the oldest purchase is to Levi Minds August 6th. 1809 for the Henry Rigsby's place near Mysville and the next to Charles Cabaniess August 7th 1809 of the Tate place near Hazel Green. A large proportion of the first purchasers were men of culture wealth and refinement, who came here with their slaves, cleared the lands and rapidly accumulated property. An inspection of the purchases made in 1809 show that settlements were made on the most desirous lands in different parts of the county and give us a fair record of the names of the early settlers. I append the names of the county with the locality of their purchasing west of Meridian road in Hazel Green district. Wallace Estell, T. Allen, Gamb, John and Allen Murphey, Robt. Thompson entered along the road from Fowlers Creek to old Hazel Green. Jane Tayler, Robert Donnell, Robt. Murphey and Robt. Thompson on the lands known as the Billy Thompson place. East of Meridian road Charles Cabaness entered the Tate place and Samuel Allen, Daniel Smith and R. Bradford the Sam Townsen place east of the road and the Slaughter place. The above named localities west and east of the road were seats of the largest farming settlements in the county at that time. There was a settlement near the Sulphur Springs where Moses Jones, J. McCowen, Stephen Griffith Nathaniel Cower and Lewis Ellis, John Robbin located lands in 1809. Around Meridianville on west side of road Robt. Thompson entered all the land along the road to section corner north of Meridianville and Thomas Bibb and Reuben Brockon west of road from said corner to section corner south of Meridianville and James Manning entered the Battle place. Thence west on what was known as the Wade and Powel Road, Stephen Pate, Isham Hawkins, J. P. Powell, Rowland Cornelius, Chas. Hanfith and B. S. Pope entered in 1809 making the outlines of a settlement along the Wade and Powell road from B. S. Popes on Meridian Road to Rowland Cornelius on Pulaski Road (now Wm. M. Matthews place) on east of Meridian road. The lands next to Meridian road to sec. corner line North of Meridian were entered by J. Richard Cavott, thence to sec. corner

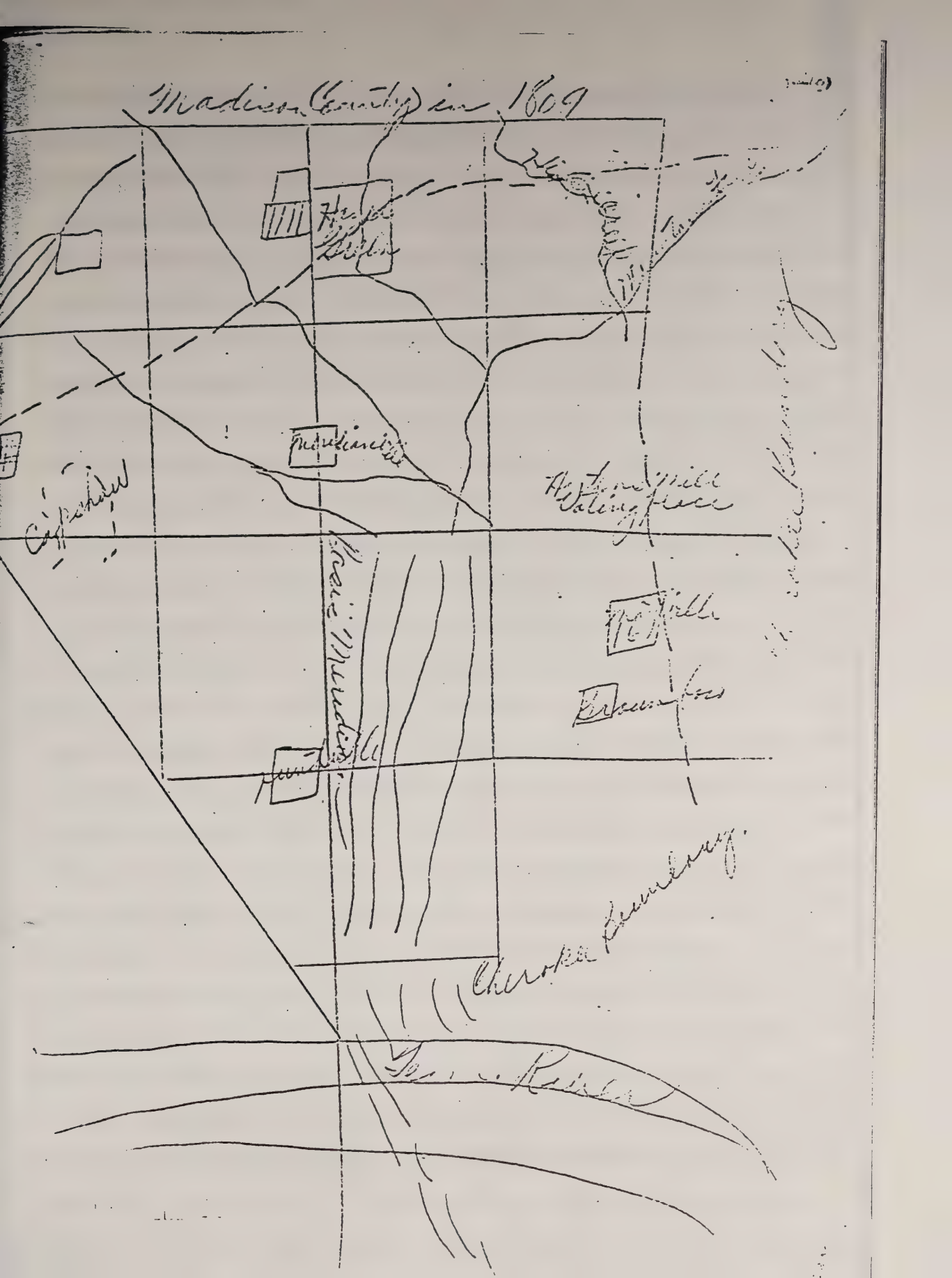
outh of Morridianville by m. and J. C. Watkins. The lands east of 16, Sec. by Jacob Pruett and the lands still east to Vinnings to L. D. Hughleys place by Jacob Pruitt, Daniel Smith John Vinning. The settlement entered east to Flint river and south to Bell Factory where lands were entered by Thomas McCrary at McCrary place, John Bayless on the Bayless place, Jno. Wright on the Wright, New Market place, Charles Kennedy near the Allison place on Winchester road and William Haughton at Flint river bridge near which was established about this time the second voting place in Madison County, and where the first mill was built on Flint river. Thus we find there was a large settlement from Moridianville to the three forks of Flint River. There was also a settlement in west side of the county on present county line where Capt. Burrus located at what was afterwards known as Burrus store. Coming south from Popes place we cross the ridge and pass Sec. 13, now the Moss place settled by Peyton Cross, Richard Harris, and John F. Leake running back to the Blue Spring on Harris land where the camp ground was located. John F. Walker entered the Austin place east of the road down to the Horton place then Charles Cabiness owned down to the stakes near Harrison place where Hugh McVey came on and owned down to Brahams or Calhouns north Boundary. West from Huntsville along the township or Athens road over Russells Hill west to Beasleys place and along which George Dilworth was on Aleck Jones place and Edward Ward on north part of the Bradford place. On each side of the Meridian Road along the road came John Hodges, John Connaly, Henry Case and David Thompson, Charles Cabaness, Moss Vincent, John Brahan and Leroy Pope to the S. W. corner of the Township east of the Basis Meridian just across the mountain on present Belleforte road. Parrot Steger located the present Woodson or Wiley place part of which is on the north [illegible] E. Harris and Harry Harris, Henry Harless and others located part of C. Brahans and D. L. Moses places around which was a considerable settlement running out to Wilsons now F. F. Jordans place on Flint River. South of this on west of Flint river was the Brownsboro settlement where John Lamberson, Solomon Mascongale, J. . Hewlett made entries at which time also lived George Taylor, Chas. McCarthey,

John Brown and others who located their lands in 1810-11 south of Huntsville and west of the basis Meridian. The land was taken up in large bodies by Lolby Pope, John Brahan, William Lanier, Thomas Bibb, Robt. Landford and Egbert Harris and Andrew Sibley entered part of the Sibley place at Sibleys old mill and Frances Anderson, Archie McDonnell, Peregrine Falconer, William Robertson, Thomas Freeman, Samuel and Joseph Acklen entered large bodies of valuable lands west of the road towards Whitesburgh. The lands on the river were entered some time afterwards and there were but few settlers on west of Basis Meridian except the negroes. East of the Basis Meridian running to the mountain first came Lewellen Jones part of whose lands are now in Huntsville then James Woods, then James and William Drake, then Wm. Hogan on part of Garth place, Wm. Gillespie and Wm. Blevins and east of the cove came John Blevins at entrance of Blevins Gap on still south came Henry Haines and Stephen Smith in Haynes Cove and then came William Robertsons large plantation also the Garners now covered by the S. H. Moore and Boirn plantations east of the Meridian. John Grayson made the only entry in 1809 in the big cove on part of the old James C. Grayson place.

Settlements East of Flint River.

This includes from Hickory Flat to Maysville. Elijah Franklin entered the Petty place on the state line on the Limestone road, James Walker, Reubin Wade and James Wood settled around Elyna Post Office on Winchester road and Samuel Davis and John Weaver and J. Villam about the Bostic place on same road. Garland Miller, Wm. Steadman and Labon Rice located the lands west of main street in New Market, and George Smith the land east of same in sec. 33 Charles Robertson made an entry at the old McCrary Young place further down the Deposit road. Stephen Kennemer entered the Geron place, James Hamilton who carried out a company in 1812 lived at the John Rigsby place, John Peters at the George Anderson place and William Derrick owned the old Beasley place and the west part is now Wynnville. Geo. Taylor lived near the Bridge over Flint River on Bellefonte road and Charles McCarthey had a house near where Brownsboro depot now stands. John Sprowl at the Ben Lawler place

on Deposit road, Ebenezer Byram and John Derrick owned the land from the cross roads in Maysville south of the Belleforte road. John Derrick to Flin Jordan line and E. Bryam beyond and including Dr. Jordans residence. Levi and Samuel Byram entered the Allen Stephen homestead which was the end of the settlements in this direction. These localities are of settlements in the county in 1809. The diagram on opposite page gives the location of the settlement in the year 1809. There were of course many settlers who did not buy lands until later but the settlements were located as I have given them on the opposite page. The war of 1812 checked for awhile the tide of emigration as Tecumsey visited the southern tribes and endeavored to rouse them against the whites. His eloquence does not seem to have had much effect on our nearist neighbors, the Chickasaws and Cherokees. They had come in contact with the white man often enough to become satisfied and in Jacksons war 1812-13 many of them joined his forces as scouts. But many who had intended emigration, and purchased lands here did not bring their families here until after the war of 1812 was virtually ended by the extermination of the old Creek tribe. On proclamation of peace in 1815 the tide of emigration set in a new and was greater than ever. An inspection of the diagram will convince any one acquainted with the topography of the county through these old fellows knew how to select good land but they could not buy it all and by the year 1816 most of the land of the first quality in the old county was taken up. Suppose four thousand settlers to have been on the lands shown to be settled in 1809 and then emagine ten thousand more to have come here and occupied the land by 1816 and we can form an idea what a vast difference it would make. The result was that except the lands taken up by the barrens, mountains and rivers it would make the diagram nearly solid red and indicate nearly the same lands entered in old Madison as the maps now indicate. But in 1818 the rich lands in this part of the county were surveyed and placed in the market and land went up to an even more higher price. Some of it being bidden at as high as one hundred dollars per acre. The diagram on the next page will show how rapidly these lands were taken up after which I will give the names of purchases that came in after 1809. This diagram shows the lands taken up in the


Madison County in 1809

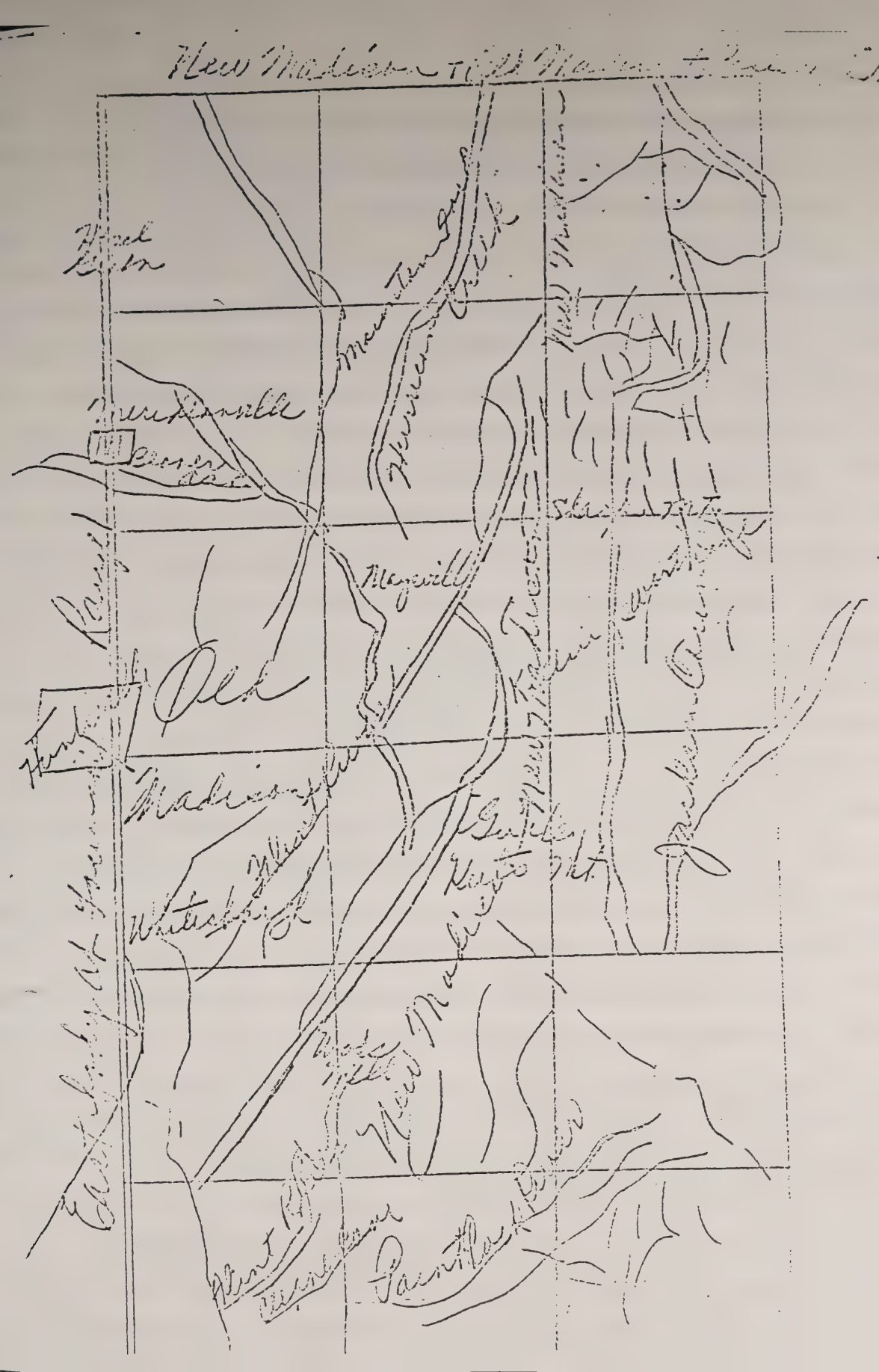
new district up to January 1st. 1820 about a year and a half after they were put upon the market. There was about 70,000 acres in this new survey added to Madison County or about 110 square miles and it is by far the most valuable body of land in the county from the diagram about 40,000 acres was taken to 1820 and many of the original purchases who paid over enormus prices had to obtain relief by act of congress when cancelled the original sales and purchases by loosing the money first paid, obtained it by paying an additional preemption rate of two dollars per acre. We find many new names among the settlers some of whom came here at an early day but had made no entries until this time. Others came later had made money and now invested in these lands. Among the settlers whose reputations as men of prominence and who were not here in 1809 are William Patton and James Manning, old merchants of Huntsville. Micha Rumbolt from whom we have Rumbolt Mountain near Madison, Reuben Crutcher and William Crutcher Baptist Ministers well and favorably known in their time. James Galbraith, Henry Moore, E. Massey, Nathaniel Norwood, Robt. Payne, Tho Hards, Joel W. Jones, Samuel Matthews, R. Cooch, T. Solomon Mosely, Thomas and William Brandon, E. H. Boardman, Mildred Rawlins, John Withers and Clement Comer Clay and Gross Schruggs all names familiar to our people and many of whom are credited to something more than a mere mention in these pages. We also find the well known names of William East, Wiley Pride, Charles Betts and Memes Clemmens, Michael Farley, Steth Spragins, E. H. Boardman, John Cartwright, R. Oakley, James Collier, Richard Jamar, John C. Ayres, John W. Looney, William Weeden, Alvan Bradford, Charles Ford, Arthur Jones, Harris Toney, William I. Adair, John Lindsey, Joshua and Ed. Dillard many of whom bought large plantations in this section and will receive further notice hereafter, the most part of the lands in this district not bid off at the land sales in 1818 were donated to Alabama by the General Government for improvement of Tennessee river and were nearly all bought by holders under sale of 1818. About the year 31-2 there is very little vacant land in this

part of the county and as it was bought by slave holders and generally in large tracts it became the home of large numbers of slaves whose descendants still predominate in the proportion of about four to one and they contribute a large amount of the cotton crop of the county as from their training it is a favorite crop with them. At the land sales in 1818 tracts of eighty acres were the minimum quantity sold in each tract. The lands in T. 3 R. 2 W and the west part of T 4, R2, W2, about three miles south and two east were part of the Barrens, though timbered and better land than the (Northern Barrens) and is very healthy and well watered. There is probably no healthier little town in the south than Madison that is situated on the southern edge of this region. The southern part of this survey for seven or eight miles from the river is cut by sloughs made by Indian Creek and Millbrook as they approach the river and backwater from the Tennessee often cov the lowlands but while this makes malaria prevalent in some localities yet there are many delightful and salutrious old county seats on the ridges and when occupied by a large white population the town of Trianna was considered a very healthy pl[illegible].

New Madison-----

Prior to 1817 New Madison was part of the Cherokees Nation in which year Andrew Jackson made the treaty with them that completed the cession of their territory north of the Tennessee to the United States. From various cause the survey of this part of the county was commenced in 1819 and continued with long intermissions until the beginning of 1830. The year 1830 was a memorable year in Alabama and Mississippi as in the year occured the event known to the old citizens as the year of the great land sales and to day it is an era from which many of our old citizens reckon the date of events happening a few years before or a few years after that date it being the year from which many of the old landholders date their settlement of their present homes, New Madison differed then and still differs in many respects from west or olf Madison. While olf Madison offered great facilities for opening large farms, New Madison made up primarily of long valleys between mountains in the midst of which valleys run large clear creeks or rivers was favorable for settlements

of small farmers and most of the settlers in that region began with small tracts of 80 or 160 acres. Though many of them from small beginnings worked their way to prosperity yet but few accumulated large property and this part of the county has always been essentially white mans country. Though over fifty years have passed yet a large part of the lands in that section are yet in the hands of the original purchasers or their decendants. The emigration to the new lands was great for many years and it is still largely increasing its population. It offered many advantages to the class of settlers whose means were sufficient to purchase a home and also of the class that never have a home of their own. The land was good, timber and water in great abundance and the climate mild and healthy. This induced large emigration not only from Tenn. and Ga. but also from the older part of the county which furnished many of its best and most influential citizens. There were but little distinction between the richer and poorer as general social equality prevailed and a man was estimated by his merit and not accident of birth or wordly advantages. The man who worked hard made money while he who worked but little managed to live comfortably. Consequently in five or six years this county was comparitively thickly settled by a moral contented and prosperous communnity. In the year 1819 it was made part of Jackson County. In 1821 it was made part of Decatur County but when Jackson county was organized in 1819 Flint River was made the county line from the intersection of the Cherokee line with the river to its mouth, in the year 1823-4 Decatur county was abolished and Madison county extended eastward to its present limits. Thus it happened that some of our citizens were born in the Cherokee nation, lived in Jackson and Decatur Counties and died in Madison without ever changing their place of abode. This country being separated from the county city by the Monte Sano mountain ridge with Flint River to cross was for many years cut off to some extent from the old county and were a people different in character and habits and manners and customs from the people of west Madison. The speculation mania that characterized the land sales in 1818 did not prevail in 1820 and the lands were entered at from $1.25 to $2.50 per acre and in small tracts to actual settlers. The south east part of New Madison is composed of that part of the tract known as The twelve mile sq. that is N. of Paint Rock River was reserved in the treaty of 1817 by the Cherokees for educational purposes, the lands in which are still held at $1.25 per acre and is not subject to home entry but all the tillable lands in this district have long since been taken up at government rates


New Madrid
Mississippi
Missouri
Illinois
Kentucky
Tennessee
Arkansas
Oak Ridge
Hayti
Caruthersville
Portageville
Sikeston
Charleston
Dexter
Kennett
Malden
Poplar Bluff
Cape Girardeau
Jackson
Benton
Sikeston
Blytheville
Osceola
Wilson
Manila
Jonesboro
Paragould
Piggott
Corning
Pocahontas
Walnut Ridge
Hardy
Mammoth Spring
Salem
Thayer
Willow Springs
West Plains
Alton
Eminence
Ellington
Doniphan
Poplar Bluff
Dexter
Kennett
Sikeston
Charleston
Malden
Hayti
Caruthersville
Portageville
Oak Ridge
New Madrid
Missouri
Mississippi
Illinois
Kentucky
Tennessee
Arkansas

leaving the mountains and swamps that have no value except the timber on them is still the property of the Cherokees. The timber was once valuable but has been depredated upon until it is now of but little value. The accompanying map shows the topography of New Madison. It is very irregular in outline. Decatur County embraces the part south of the dotted line on South Boundary of second row of Townships this County extended eastward to Bellefonte road, thence by an irregular line to Santa Creek, thence to Tennessee River, thence to Flint River then followed Flint river to Cherokee line, thence with line to North Boundary of the State, thence to present east boundary of this County legislature of 1824 discovered that Decatur County did not contain the Constitutional area six hundred square miles and it was abolished. Its county site was Woodville in Jackson County. When Jackson County was formed in 1819 the small in S. W. of New Madison between Flint River and the Cherokee Boundary was added to Madison County. when Decatur County. When Decatur County was abolished the Boundary of Madison and Jackson was established in the continuation of the dividing ridge between the waters of Flint and point rock to where the mountain ridge terminates on the 2nd. range line north of the John Robertson place, thence following the ridge line the twelve mile square line on south brink of Keels Mt. then with the twelve mile square line to it the northern boundary of said county the S. W. corner of Jackson, to Point Rock Decatur County included New Madison , to Santa Creek and that part of Marshall County North of Tenn. river and it was probably the worse shaped County ever established in the state as there was not a straight line bounding it any where except five or six miles on the Tenn. line. It was about five miles wide on State line nearly fifty miles long and cut to pieces by mountain ridges. Its County site was woodville, Jackson County which was nearly a central point in the County. Its boundarys were too indefinite to explain at the present time and it contained about four hundred square miles, until the year 1843 the line between Madison and Jackson from Gurley to the state line was an open line. Each man took his County by the way his spring branch ran which was a literal interpretation of the law but in 1843 the County surveyors marked out the line and made a kind of average line by running from point to point where the ridge was defined

by spring and thus avoided the thousand crooks and turns involved in following the dividing ridge. The county tract books were made according to their report and is official evidence in the courts and is given in this map. The date of the settlement of New Madison County the year 1831 it is hardly necessary to give a circumstantial account of the pioneers in this region as they are well remembered by the older settlers who still survive. It will be seen from the map that this part of the county is mountainous and whil the mountains occupy considerable area of the County yet there are many fine farms in this section and it is especially adapted to the raising of stock and provisions. From the state line down to the Maysville County it obtained the name of Egypt on account of the immense amount of grain and pork it produced and during the war the federals pronounced it as one of the best foraging grounds they visited in the South.

Madison County

I have been given a detail of the settlement of the different parts of the county from the first settlement until the County attained its present dimensions and I now propose to consider it as a whole instead of in separate parts. This had always been a land of peace until the Civil Wars. The Chickasaws and Cherokees claimed the limit of their hunting grounds passed somewhere through the County and as they had no settlements nearer than those on Tennessee River this region has no tradition of any conflict between hostile tribes. It is said that neither tribe had any permanent hesitation in the county away from the river and it is probable that other localities were more congenial for their towns. The immense canebrakes in the river bottoms, the heavy forests all over the County. The rough mountains inhabitated by wolves, bears, and panthers and large venomous serpents was not a suitable permanent abode for the red men. But while there is no indications of towns or villages yet it was doubtless a place of resort for great hunting parties who come here in summer and Autumn and as winter approached returned to the neighborhood of Huntersville or to Tuscumbia (old Cotapoosa) laden with game. The early settlers in East Madison very seldom saw any Indians and they were not troublesome. Peace existed with the Government and with the exception of occasionally driving off the

settlers horses, there was no disturbance when horses were stolen the settlers generally followed up to the nearest settlement and by making appeal to their Chiefs their property was generally traced up and restored to them. It was a very simple proceeding there was no replevying or making bond the chiefs satisfied themselves that the property belonged to the whites turned their horses over to them pointed northward and said "Go" and the settlers obeyed bringing with them their recovered property. The war of 1812 found a population of some six thousand in the county and there was great confusion existing as to the attitude of the Indians, but the conduct of the Indians soon dissipated their fears. After a time news of the massacre at Fort Mimms reached here and of the call of Gen. Jackson for volunteers and great enthusiam prevailed. Many of the settlers were soldiers of the Revolution and Veterans in Indian warfare deriving their experience in battle for supremacy in middle Tennessee and Eastern Georgia, and sons of these men burned to emulate the deeds of their fathers. As well as I can learn there were not less than four companies raised in Madison County to wit. Capt. Jack Mosely, John R. Eldridge, David Gray, and James Hamiltons Companies. Capt. Gray was from West Madison near the Indian line, Capts. Mosely and Eldridge Companies were made up along the central part of the county and Capt. Hamiltons from the Eastern portion of the county and nearly all the families in the county were represented. These companies first went into action at Talladega under command of Gen. John E. Coffee. Soon after they were mustered into service a pioneer or scouting company was formed by detail from the regiment and placed in command of Capt. Mosely. This company saw a great deal of hard service and received the commendations of General Jackson on their discharge from the service. The term of these troops expired shortly after the battle of Horse Shoe Bend and they were discharged and returned home. Capt. Hamiltons Company at the battle of----------
----------was in the hottest of the fight just before day break and though many suffered severly, yet held their ground until the repulse of the enemy. There were many of the company killed and wounded among whom was John Dunn killed Mr. McCartney mortally wounded and died in four or five days after the battle and

Grant Taylor shot through the body and died many years afterwards from the wound which never healed. I can recollect the names of these three only who were sons of citizens near old Brownsboro. T hese troops did not suffer severly at Horse Shoe Bend as they were across the river with Russells spies to cut off the retreat of the Indians which was so effectually done that the Creek trive was nearly exterminated and its spirit broken. As emigration poured into the territory and as land advanced in price, longing eyes were cast in the direction of the rich Indian lands lying all round the County and it was only by the exercise of close military supervision that intruders were kept out of the Indian Territory and at one raid the troops are said to have burned forty or fifty houses and destroyed many crops of parties who concluded to take the risk and settle on the wrong side of the Indian lines. On the New Purchase many half-breed Indians elected to stay in the Country when the Cherokees went west and by the treaty all such were entitled to one square mile of land with their houses in the centre and these lands were laid off before the survey of the public lands and called the Indian reservations. Only four of these reservations were in this county viz Thomas Wilson, McMiltys and Challenges or Conaleskys on Hurricane Creek and in Sharps Cove and William Wilsons on McClunkh place near Coles Ford on Flint River. These were disposed of by the Indians in a short time and the occupants followed their tribes over into Arkansas. The twelve mile square was surveyed after the laying out of the public land and before the lands were placed in market and were taken up like any other lands at that time. It is something remarkable that in 1820 when the population of this county was restricted to the old county that the white population was a heavy in proportion to territory as at any time prior to the year 1860 population of this county was as follows in 1816-14,200, 10,000 whites and 42,00 colored. In 1820, 17,481 white , 10,000 colored 7,000. 1830- 27990 white 14,000 colored 13,000. 1840 25,688-whites 13,000, colored 12500. 1850-- 36427 whites ----colored ------ 1860-36520---whites----Colored-----. Thus it will be seen that the population reaches its Ante Bellum limit between the years 1820 and 1830 the increasing in population in the two decades being nearly equal. And up to 1860 there had been a slight decrease. In 1819 the vote

or Government was for Bibb 1835, for Williams 1844 and in the year 1850 when in an xci.ed local election when every effort possible was exerted to bring out a full ote there was polled a vote of 2900--This shows but little increase in the white ote. In the year 1870 the population was a little over 31,000 and in 1880 about ,000 showing that from the war until the present time the increase in population as been equal to any like period since the year 1816. There was a heavy increase n population to 1830 in consequence of the rapid settlement of New Madison but the lder part of the County held its own by the increase in the colored population who or than made up for the whites who removed to the New part of the County. Between he years 1830 and 1840 came the financial crisis that wrecked the fortunes of so any of our citizens making a marked decrease in population at that period. Cotton and dropped down to a low ebb and many who had bought on credit found it impossible to meet their obligations, many of the banks that had under the banking system of hat time advanced largely in excess of their assets suspended payment, and lar racts of land were sold under execution. This did not materially effect the Eastern portion of the County which steadily increased in population but in the western portion where large capital was invested and heavy liabilities covered the prostration in business was universal. And but few escaped financial embarrassment or ruin. Many of our best citizens sought new homes to repair their broken fortunes on fresher lands. The farms in the county many of them at least after thirty years of continual cultivation in cotton had fallen off largely in producing power and many of them originally of poor quality were gradually abandoned, many of the slaves seeking them being carried westward, this was not due to any material decrease in the agricultural resources of the county but to the natural consequences of inflated prices. Reckless speculation and the natural revolution following. This is proved by the fact that the few business men who forsaw, and avoided disaster steadily accumulated property and were silently but surely laying the foundation for material prosperity in this the darkest period of our financial history. It is a fact that shows beyond dispute the capabilities of our soil that very few skilful farmers who steered clear of debt and speculation who practiced the economy means in all avocations failed to accumulate property from the first and on through all financial trouble brought on the county. The farmer was so fortunate as to obtain in the means to buy a negro or two when the country was new, was on the road to----------

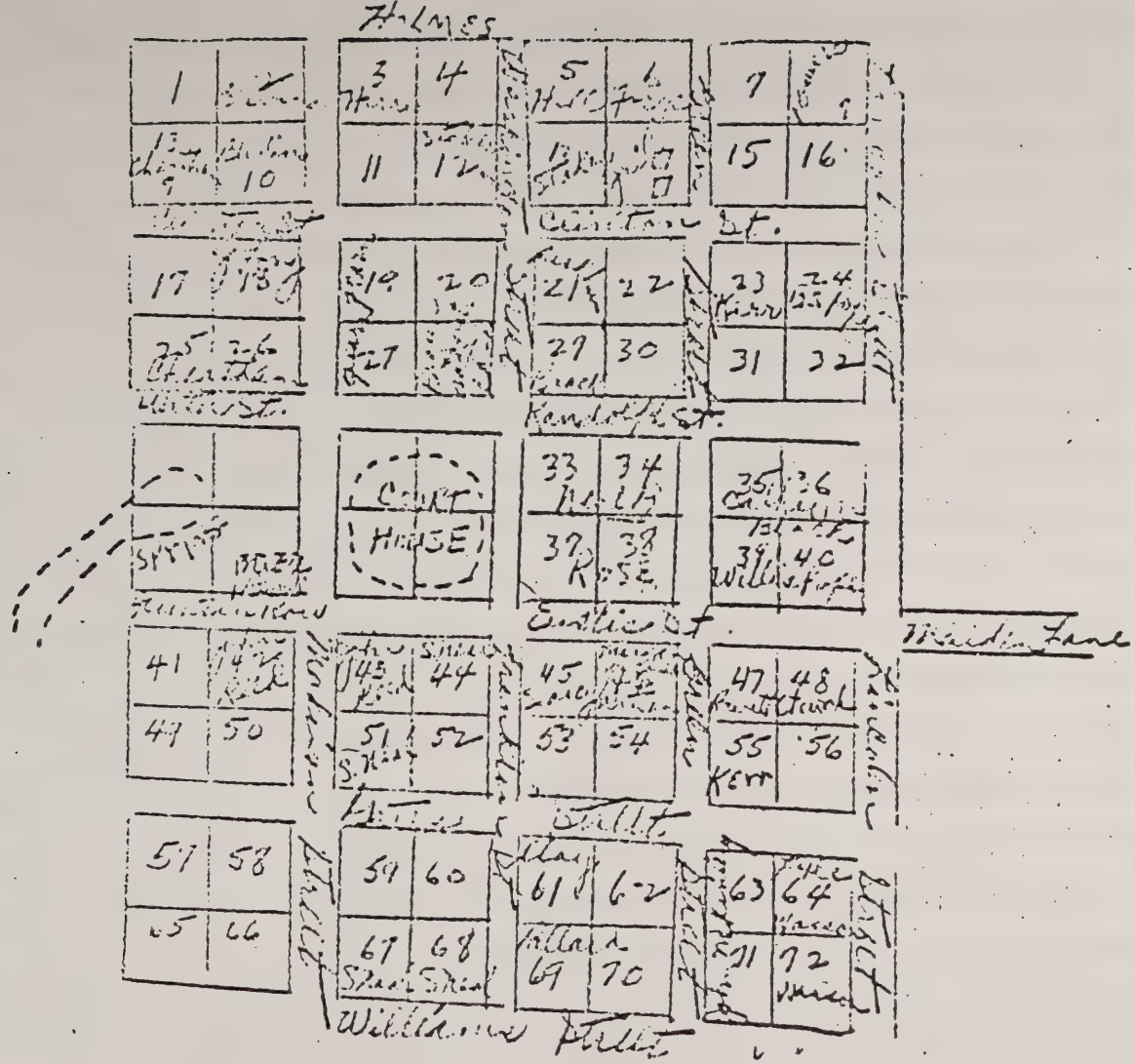
fortune. The negroes when well treated were a prolific race and their increase yield an enormous return on the original outlay. It was in this way that many of the old o overseers made their fortunes. Though their wages were numerous with pieces of intellegen superintendents seemed small yet in reality they were well paid. The former with a large plantation probably lived in Huntsville but on the quarter he built a good house for his overseer and furnished his family and provided him with a good horse. The owner probably beginning on two hundred and fifty dollars a year saved nearly all his money and if he showed by crop returns that he was increasing, the planters income his wages were increased year by year until they reached their maximum at five or six hundred dollars a year. The planter probably continued to spend as he lived extravagantly. Made notes in hand and finally settled up with overseer by paying him in parcels of land. The overseer became a planter he has invested in good lands he has bought two or three young Negro families husbands,wives that were so in geometrical proportion he cultivated his land in the best style and works side by side with h his workers - slaves that receive good treatment - every year his working force increases and he adds to it little by little until he finds on reaching middle age that he is an extensive land holder and slave owner. By this time negro families probably a father and twelve or two children have developed into a working crew of eight or ten a planter well trained field hands worth several thousand dollars which represent the profits after deducting expenses and Taxes. By the aid of the labor of the original families he very likely purchased others with like results. I have known many cases of a slave Mother and twelve or fifteen children many of them good field hands the property of the original owner who bought the Mother when and had raised the entire family. Fortunately these old settlers knew how to work for they and their wives had a hard time when they had new young family of their own and a few young family or two of negroes to keep up. When they owned the wife and not the husband which was often the case the husbands labor was of no benefit to his family on the contrary the owner of his wife generally had to feed him from Saturday night until Monday Morning. But then the white man and his wife were stimulated by the prospect of future returning the good wife waited on her prolific servant as she annually required

attention, took care of the colored children with her own when the owner was able to help do out door work getting one days service in the week for washing and doing the ironing herself. Her life was one of arduous toil but the women of that day were patient healthy economical and industrious wives and did their whole duty in providing for their husbands.

Huntsville------

I now propose to take up the settlement of the different towns in the County beginning with the City of Huntsville. The land on which Huntsville stands is in sections. 35 and 36 T-3-N-1-East and in Sec. 1- and 2-T, 4N-1East with larger part of the town in Sec. 36 . In the diagram annexed to the article will show this land except the North West quarter of Section 36 entered by John Graham was intpred by Leroy Pope in August 1809, The Tennessee Land Company in 1070 deeded one thousand acres with the Spring near the center to one Martin County it being one of the first deeds on the County records and I suppose his claim was settled under the act of Congress adjudging the claims of parties deriving their titles from the "YazooCompany". We find the said deed specifies that this tract was to include The Big Spring. While explorers had come down the Tennessee and the crossing at Deposit and Bitles Landing more known to the Whites in the year 1800 Yet the Great Tennessee Bend was a terra onognita to them, up to 1804 a few Indian traders had pass ports from Indian Chiefs through the Creek Nation and Cherokee Country. And some of these men had probably been at the Big Spring. It was a well known point to the Indians who told wonderful stories of the great creek gushing from the Limestone cliffs and John Hunt came here for the express purpose of finding this spring and locating near it. The line between the Chickasaws and Cherokees was rather an indefinite one until established by United St tes surveyors under the supervision of Commissioners representing the United States and the Indian tribes. This locality being reported as common property by the Indians a few white settlers without let or hindrance from either tribe quietly squatted here and by the year 1807 when the cession was made by the Indians several families were located around the Spring

Huntsville as laid out in 1810.

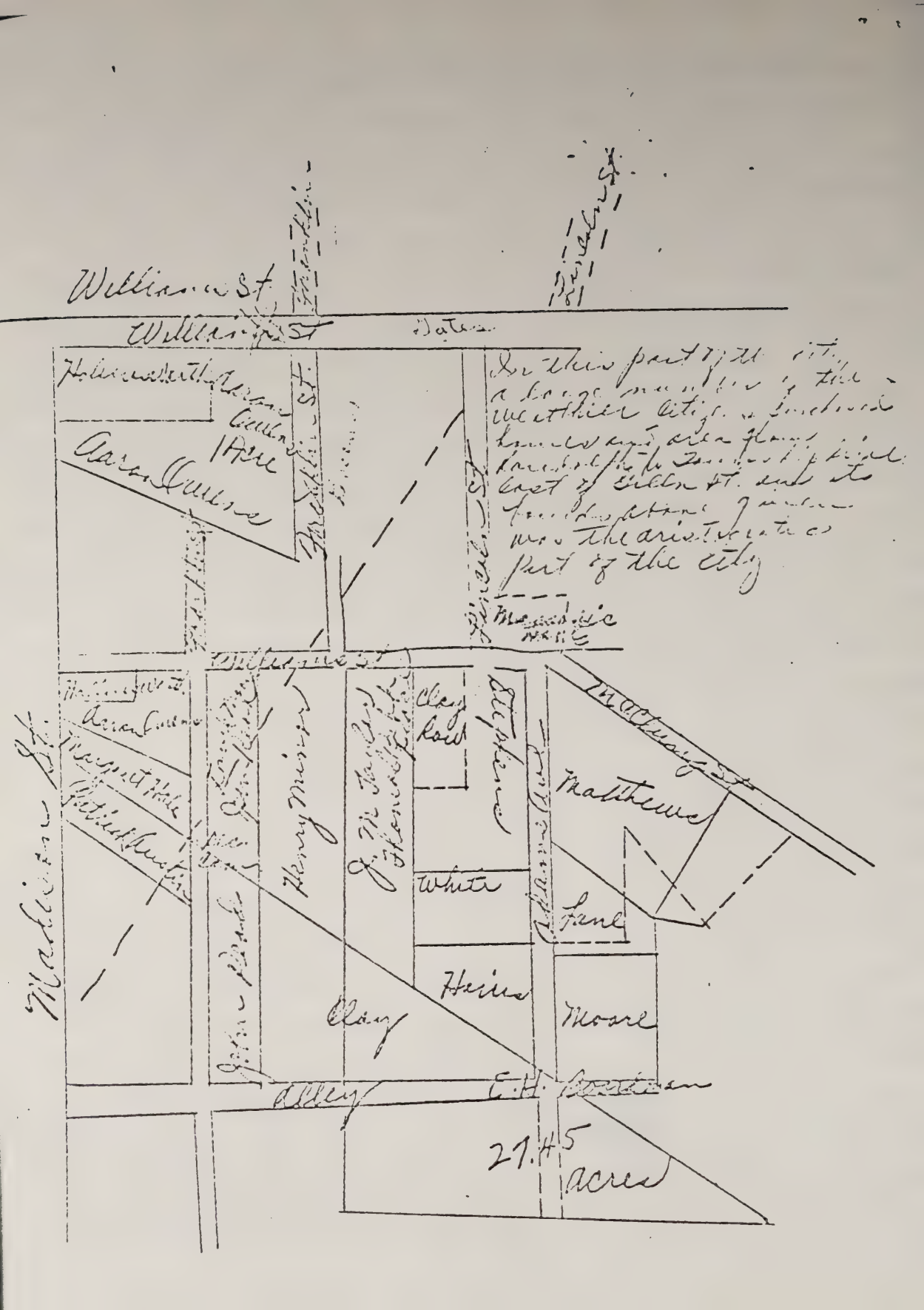


among whom was Stephen Neal the first sheriff and Joseph Hicklen who were sons-in-law and the Morgans who were also related to John Hunt. It is important that the citizens of the town have not been able to retain the identity of Hunts first cabin, we only know that it was built on a bluff near the spring some maintaining that it was on the hill near the old McKay school house and others that it was on the bluff somewhere about Bank Row which last supposition is improbable from the locality of that point when in a state of nature. Pioneers in building on localities like this never selected a point where they would have to go two or three hundred yards around a bluff to reach the water but usually built nearer the level of the spring. And along Henry Street seems to be the most likely places for settlement. By the year 1809 a settlement of several hundred was located in reach of the big spring, running back to Popes Ridge and down the Whitesburgh Pike to the Township line. There were no buildings on what is now the publice square which was a rough rocky knowl sloping on every side and with a large pond from the Powers corner towards the Jail. After the County was organized in 1809, and act of the territorial legislature dated Dec. 23rd. 1809 appointed Wm. Dickson, Edward Ward, Alex Gilbreath, Louis Winston, and Peter Perkins commissioners to select a suitable site for the County seat of Madison and were authorized to purchase not less than thiry acres of ground and law it off in half acre lots from which were to be reserved three acres for public buildings. The remainder of these lots were to be sold on twelve months credit and the proceeds when collected were to be applied to erecting public buildings. Leroy Pope had already purchased these lands from the general Gov. and it appears that he laid off the town as shown in the plat of same some time in the year of 1810. The plan of the town is given on the opposite page. It contained seventy two lots exclusive of the public square , the whole town containing an area of about sixty acres. Pope sold the south half to the commissioners the line running directly through the Court House to Bank Row from which was excepted Lots No. 71 and 72, 39 and 38, but it appears that he donated the other half of the square and the jail lot as there is no record of the deed to them. In deeding this land Pope stipulated that convenient ways should be kept open and to the spring and no one allowed to damage it by obstructing its waters.

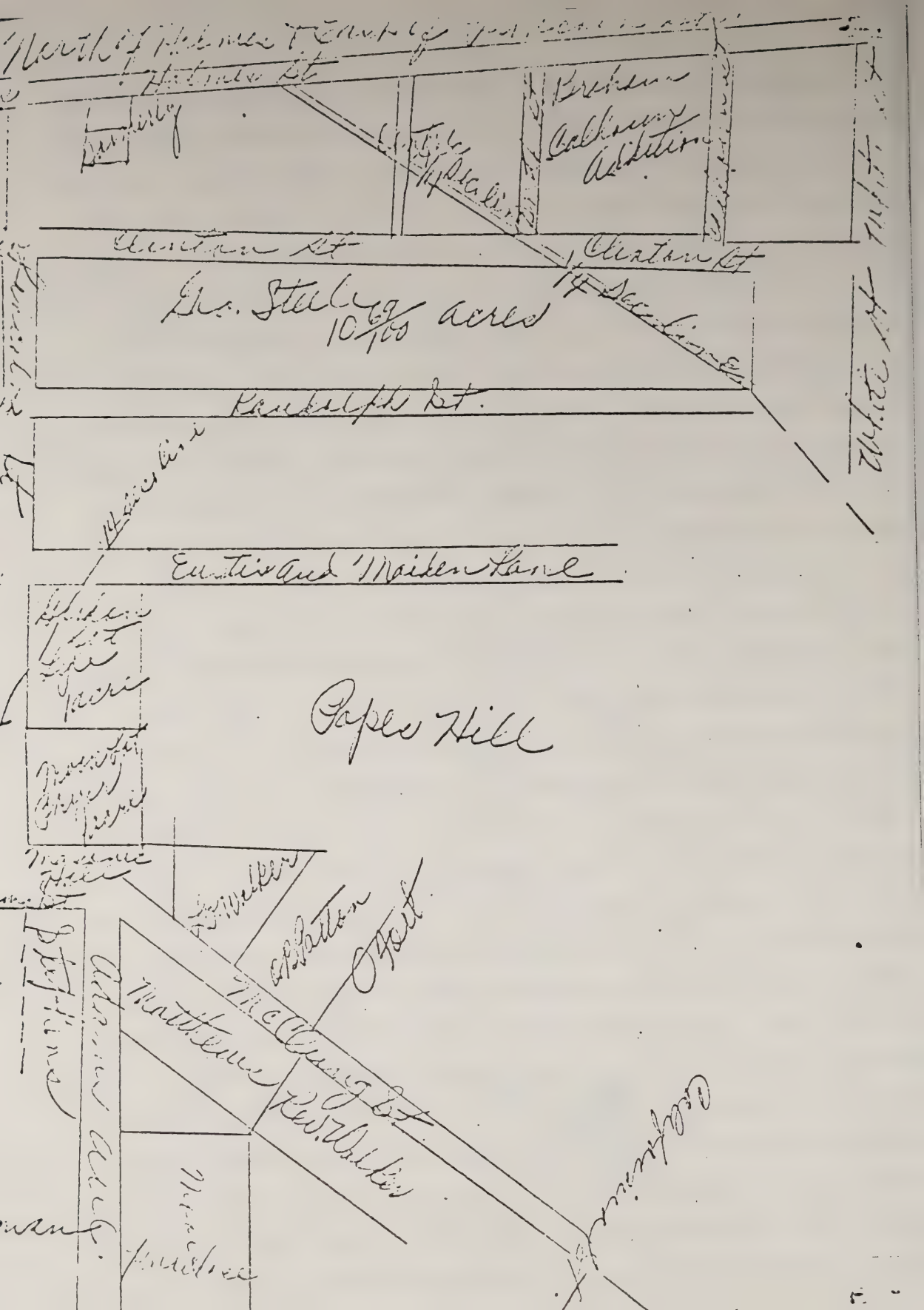
spring and nor one allowed to damage it by obstructing its waters. The commissioners sold these lots rapidly and gave certificated of purchase to buyers but for some reason Polk never made them a deed nor they to the purchasers of the lots until about the year 1875. Unfortunately the original plat of the town was not recorded but a reference to some other surveys about that date make it probably the first survey was made by John M. Leake who seems to have been recognized as a legal surveyors at that time. A survey and plat was made by Hunter Peel in 1821 by order or the town trustees and is erroneously considered by many to be the original plat of the town though it is doubtless a correct survey of the town originally laid out. It is a matter of congratulation that the original founder of the city was a man of taste, intelligence and liberality for to the generous with of the streets donated by him and the symetry of the square the city is indebted for the beauty, neatness and regularity for which it has so great and just reputation. The pecular angle of the streets it being 34 degrees north of west as a bases was on account of the conformation of the bluffs around the spring that made this the only angle that would suitably enclose the spring in a town square without loss of ground on one side or the other this arrangement made Jefferson Street the basis of the survey. And enclosed the spring nearly in the center of its square and it is unfortunate for the town that a single foot of land on that square should ever have been donated to buildings purposes. It ought to have been made public property enclosed and suitably improved for resort of the citizens during the summer seasons. Tomorrow if we were to ascend Monte Sano and seat ourselves on the old stone house or on Allens rock a beautiful panorma would be spread at our feet. Away off to the hills of Elk River we would see plantations after plantation marked by boundaries of fence or hedge like some vast checker board with squares of every variety of shade from the bright yellow of the harvest to dark somber hue of the cedar mountains off to the west we could see the thread like track of the railroads and occasionally the short white quick puff of the locomotive drawing its line of cars and looking southward through the long mountain passes we would see the silver gleam of the waters of Tennessee beyond Bear Trail Mountain as it makes a sweeping curve near the ancient City of Triana and makes abroad expanse of its

waters. Beyond we would see the south Mountain Range peak behind peak until they mellow in the blue haze in distant horizon. And loveliest of all we would see our little city nestling at our feet its broad white streets clearly defined and its beautiful square with shrubery intermingled with the white buildings set like jewels over the surface of the little round bowl surrounded by the green mountains and high lands while we could trace the silvery waters from the spring until lost in the distant forests. It is well worth the toil of ascending the mountains to look upon this magnificent panorama. But if we could go back to 1809 and see this valley as our ancestors saw it, the view would be quite a contrast to its present appearance. A mountain ridge thickly covered with cedar wound in sinuous course to Lopes Hill then there was a depression until near the bluff over the spring there was a round rocky knoll. Out South and West was vast expanseof low marshy swamp around this knoll from the Whitesburgh Pike around to the Merridianville Road interspersed with large ponds where the water stood and stagnated until late in summer and gave a damp unwholesome appearance to the valley that seemed condidorably below the level of the surrounding County. On every side was a vast intermingled forest broken here and there by the settlers. Around the little knoll in this low basin and creeping out in the direction of Lopes Ridge could be seen here and there the brown log cabins of the town scattered here and there in the opening made in the forest and scarcely discernible in the heavy growth of timber encompassing them. While the view was most unpromising yet here our ancestors with their usual foresight saw the germ of the future city and time, patience, and persoverance gave their hopes fulfilion. There has been a vast expenditure of labor and money in grading and leveling our streets and squares and it soon brought a wonderful change in the appearance of the town. The size of the squares was in conformity to the act of the legislature establishing the town which was called Twickonham until 1811 when the name was changed to Huntsville. In the year 1811 the land office was transfered here from Nashville and added to the importance and prosperity of the city. John Read was register in the land office at the time of the transfer and came here about that time and went into the

here about that time and went into the mercantile business in which he remained and prospered for nearly half a century. The purchased lot No. 42 now Schaudies Corner lot No. 43 now the Insurance corner, extending half way up Commercial row on which three store houses were built at a very early day. Luther and Calvin Morgan put up a house at the N. E. corner of the Square, long known as Gilbert corner to the rear of which and fronting on Franklin St. C. C. Clay had a law office. Stephen Neal first bought the lot No. 44 extending along commercial row from John Reads upper corner to the S. E. corner of the sq. He also purchased the south half of lot No. 51 that is situated at the corner of Gates and Madison Sts. and is still owned by his widow who now over ninety years of age survives the last of the generation of pioneers were here in the year 1809. John Read also built a house at the Schaudies corner which he sold to Allen Cooper in the year 1818 who lived there for a long period and was succeeded by old David T. Knox the old Silver Smith so well known to all old settlers. On the South side of the sq. where Wands and Sullivans houses now stand John Brown and A. Jemison built brick store houses which were the first on that side of the sq. The old Bell Tavern first owned by Clayton Talbot twice burned and rebuilt occupied the site of the Holding block E. of the sq. and at the time was the most pretentious building in the city. The Grove Corner was first bought by one James Brock who built a house upon it The first market house was near the old Bell Tavern and was carried to its present location about the year 1838. The first recorded sale of Town lots was lot No. 57 sold under attachment at Sheriff sale and bought by C. C. Clay and Stephen Ewing for thirty seven dollars. It is the lot which the Chapman building at the corner of Yates and Henry now occupies. The lots on Commercial row average about seven hundred and fifty dollars and the whole block a little over two thousand dollars. Pope, in selling the south half of the new town to the Commissioners reserved No. 71 and 72 or Wasson lot now occupied by R. H. Wilson and No. S. 37 and 38 being the S half of the Holding block owned then by Neal B. Rose. The entire block E. of the sq. except the ground occupied by the Bell Tavern was bought By Neal B. Rose a portly Englishman who was in the mercantile business for some time. The commissioners sold the greater part


William St.
William St
Dalton
In this part of the city a large number of the wealthier citizens and business men have their homes and also the best residences are found on Dalton St. and its tributaries. Here too the aristocracy of the city
Clay
Hein
Moore
Alley
27.45
acres

of the south portion of the old town in whole lots and they were all disposed of between the year 1809 and 1816. They had thirty two town lots and they aggregated about ten thousand dollars that was applied to the erection of public buildings. Pope subdivided his lots on North side of the town and sold the most eligible lots in small building lots and realized more than doubled the amount that was obtained for the South half of the town. He, about the year 1815 surveyed an addition to the town from the south boundary of the town to the Township line where many of the old settlers purchased residences and where now is located the most valuable town property. This addition was not recorded and cannot be accurately described but it embraced that part of the town south of William St. and East of Lincoln out to John Brahans line which ran from C. O. Shepherds South to the turn on Lincoln St. at its intersection with Randolph. There lots were of large area some of them containing three or four acres. I here give their location as near as my information permits between William St. Madison St. Adam Avenue and the Township line south to Fagans Creek. The northern portion of this quarter of town settled very slowly and a large part of it was bought in large lots. George Steele purchasing all the land from Lincoln St. Eastward between Clinton and Randolph to Brahans Line. J. K. Lyle first bought the Gordon lot and Richard Pryor the Alfred Moore Lot. Matthews lot was purchased by J. W. Melung and the lots East of Adams Avenue and South of Matthews lot were first purchased by E. H. Broadman including all the land of the Lane lot on the east and Ed. Whites lot on West of Adams Avenue and running westwardly to South west corner of the Govnr. Bibbs now George Berne Homestead running on continuation of West boundary of said lot 330, yards and included down to the creek between Adams Avenue and Fagans Creek. Between Clinton and Holmes was low and marshy and very few houses were built here until a comparatively recent date . When Calhouns addition was made to the town and Calhoun and Steele Streets located parties who had bought up to the old Brahan line made exchanges with those who purchased in the new survey and this squared their lots with the streets. Stephen Clayton and Wm. Cormley were among the first to settle south of Holmes St. and in1837 Thomas H. Howlett built the house where S. S. Darwin now resides and Isaiah Dill on the corner East of him, the land

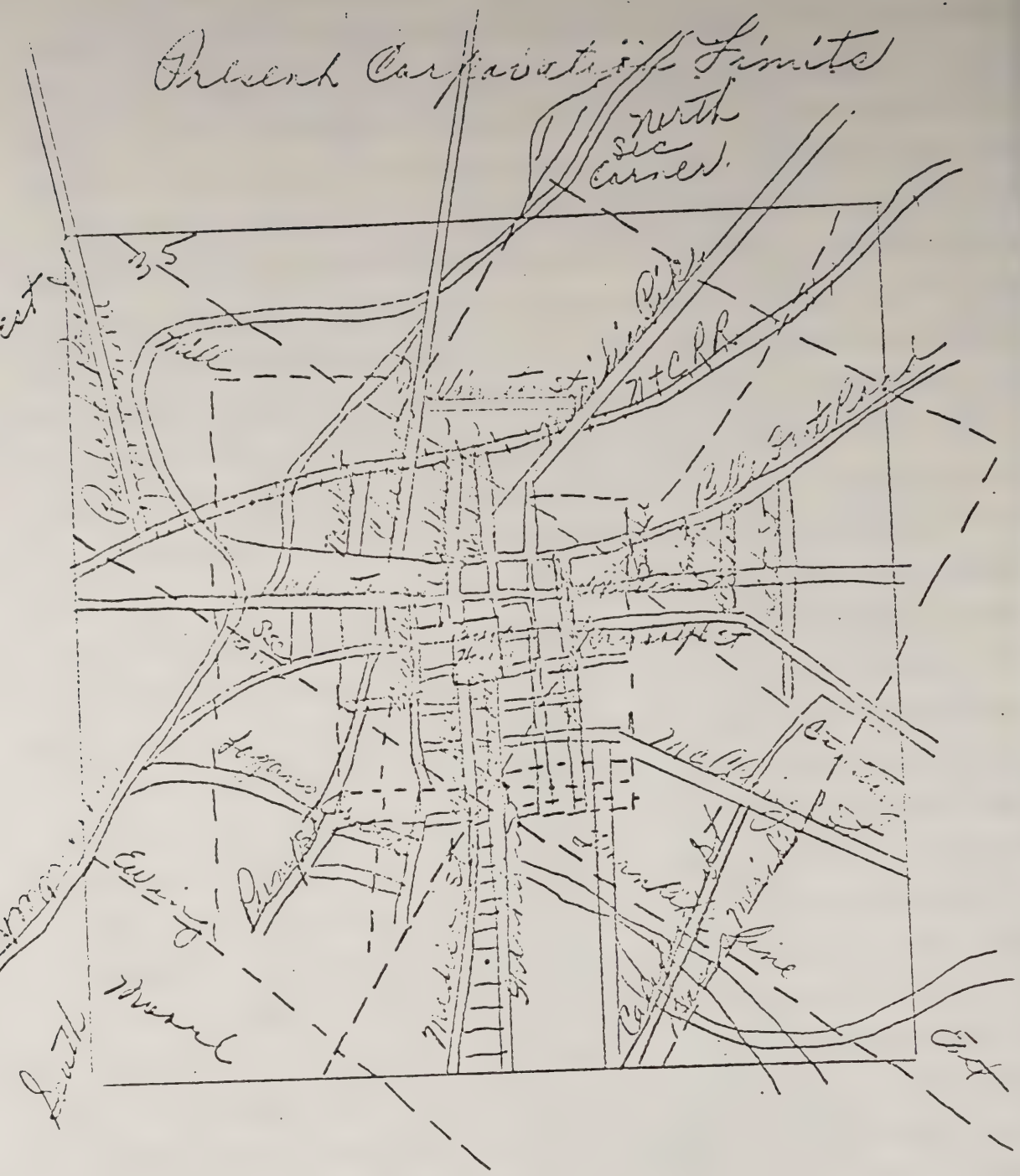

Bridewell
Bateman
Colchester
Paper Hill

on which he built occupies two lots in the Calhoun Survey from Holmes St. to a St reserved between said lot and Green Academy lot which was deeded about the year 1822 or 1823, by John Brahan to the Trustees of the Academy. Before 1857 there were no houses north of Holmes St. except Cormelys and V. A. Hinds on the quarter sec. line near where it crosses Holmes St..

In the Steel purchase along Randolph St. many good building were erected from the corner at . H. Nance house, including Huntsville College to late residence P. W. Steels including much valuable property and all the lots were sold and built on South of Randolph to J. J. Donegans place. The diagram on the opposite page gives an approximate idea of the position of the town with regard to the quarter section lines the center of sec. 36 was south of Holmes St. near the Jas. V. A. Hinds little brick house. The quarter sec. line running thence W. passed near the intersection of Green St. and Meridian Pike and cornered N. of Henderson Brandons Mill. The N. W. quarter of the sec. was purchased by the parties whose names are on the diagram but William Patton finally bought all of the subdivision as marked except Brandons. The Brandons sold to . H. Wortham and he sold the property to the N. & C. R. R. The railroad company divided it into town lots and sold many of them and there is a large population on the East South of the quarter sec. line out to Holmes St. The depot buildings are situated near the quarter section line Jefferson St. produced. In the year 1850 bothethe sqs. north of the Court House from sq. to Holmes St. and Dr. David Moores fine residence immediately North of Holmes St. were destroyed by fire and a considerable portion has been rebuilt since the war. Dr. Moore had a Gin house north of his residence on the gin lot marked on the map. That part of Pattons purchase on Green St. is said to have been the location of a grave yard prior to the purchase of the present cemetery in 1824 and the principal burial place was where the brick cottage now stands. Mayor Wm. Fleming and Lovan Shepherd were among the oldest settlers N of Holmes St. Since the war a new St. called Walker St. has been surveyed N of Holmes along which are many snug new houses on desirable lots. This part of the town is open to the N. and is the most pleasant part of the city in summer Except the Kennedy and Allen Places on the Morridian Road. Both sides of the St are comparatively new settlements but many good houses are located along the Meridian Pike for


Pope to Daly
27 50/100 acres
Daly
Jno I. Watson
20 Acres
Pope to
Wm Brandon
64
William Patton
32 70/100 Acres
Walker St.
Flumer
Stuart
Madison

the distance of two miles from town. This part of town shown on the diagram N. of Holmes St. the seat of nearly all the manufacturing establishments and should Huntsville ever be a manufacturing city here will be the great business and industrial center. After the building of the M. & C. R. R. the town drifted in the direction of the depot and the larger part of the improvement on West Holmes and Clinton, especially that part west of Blue Spring Creek was built up to some extent before the war but after the war more rapidly on the new sts. opened on the addition made by the M. & C. R. R. to wit on Church Mill and Irma St. there was rapid improvement but the removal of the shops to Tuscumbia in 1873 was a heavy blow to this part of the town within the last two years the inaugural of the Cotton Factory the cotton seed oil mill and Curry Cotton chopper Factory have made a change for the better and it seems likely that a variety of manufacturing establishments are likely to spring up in this locality and return to a prosperity more permanent than that based on the caprice of a corporate body. West Holmes St. was known to the early settlers as the weste n road and on this street was the old school house a short distance below the intersection of Gallatin St. with Holmes on the N side of Holmes St. In this street also was the original Methodist Church for which John Price donated a lot. His purchase was from Pope's addition west to Blue Spring Creek between Holmes St. and Huntsville branch and comprise the lands from Sledges Alley to the Creek from Clinton to Holmes St. and part of the land between Clinton St. and Spring Branch which was divided into 94 lots,each fronting fifty feet on Clinton and Holmes and running back to a central line between them. From the junction of the Athens and Pulaski Road a considerable village sprung up running N and E which was separated from Huntsville. The fields of Jas. Clemmons and Thos. and Wm. Brandon, the latter reaching up to Jefferson St. with their negro quarter at Johnsons and Easleys corner. This suberb to the city was on lands purchased by Henry Bibb and Neal and Biddle and was called Mechanicsville. James Barclay erected a mill near where Hendersen Brandons now stands. And up the creek near Church St. James Clemons had a still house. Willis Pope owned all the land in sec. 1 W. of Whitesburgh Pike to Dr. David Moore's line and settled the Manning (Davis Grove) place and the part of the town south of Wagons (Dry) Creek is now except the Ewing place in


Orient Car factories Limited
with
six
cars.
N & C R R

front of which ran the Triana Road. Martain Miller and Peter Bass bought the lands on which the old tanyard stood extending from Henry St. north of Davis line up to the Spring and down the spring creek to Stephens Ewings land on the north of quarter-section line Millers tanyard was a place well known to the old settlers and Martin Miller kept it up for nearly forty years and realized a handsome fortune. On the hill west of Henry St. south of the spring was the old McKay house where Mrs. McKay educated a large number of the ladies of Huntsville keeping up a school for twenty-five years. The Badlums put up the first mill near the site of the old Adam Hall mill and they also had a baking establishment opposite the corner of Williams and Madison St. opposity the corner of Hollingsworth. Dr. David Moore also had a horse mill at the N side of his gin lot on Meridian pike south of the Kennedy house nearly opposite the intersection of Walker St. with Meridian Pike. (In the year 1823 the trustees of Huntsville gave a permit to Hunter Reel by contract to erect water works for use of City. This contract stipulated that Hunter Peel in one year from date should put up a hydraulic wheel that would carry the water to a reservoir with sufficient elevation to supply the city with water. The reservoir to have a capacity of one thousand cubic ft. the pipes to be buried a sufficient depth to keep them from freezing and also to prevent obstruction in building and opening the streets. Hunter Peel was to have control of water rates and was entitled to the proceeds of water. Jas. Leroy Pope gave him the privilege of erecting a dam across the spring and building a house not over 20-30 ft. at the dam to cover his machinery. At the commencement of the work Hunter Peel formed partnership with James Barclay who was a practical Machinest and together they built the reservoir and constructed the water works and with the exception of the introduction of strem power they are but little changed from their first construction and have stood nearly sixty years.) The corporation was extended one mile in a sq. from the Court House which in 1873 was reduced by the legislature to its present limits. The sec. lines are laid off by dotted lines with number of sections on their centers which shows that the first corporation and the greater part of the second corporation were in Sec. 36. The present corporation includes nearly the whole of Sec. 36 T. 3 N. R. Also portions of Sec. 31 T. 3 N. E. of Sec. 6. to E, and part of Sec. 25 and 35. T. 3. R. W. and of Sec. I. T 4,

N. W. and contains an area of 1440 acres. In the act of 1809, appointing Commissioners to select and purchase a site for public buildings, it was enacted that the County site should be called Twickenham by which name Huntsville was known until Nov. 25, 1811. When it received its present name. The act of Dec. 8 incorporated the town with five trustees to govern it w o were required to select a town constable to collect the revenue and for other duties incident to the office. The trustees were informed to assess a tax from the property holders to raise several amounts of revenue by taxation not to exceed two-hundred dollars. On November 29th., 1815 the charter was amended by the territory legislature and it was enacted that five trustees should be elected annually by the qualified voters at same election the people elected a town treasurer, assessor, collector and Const ble to serve one year and the day. After their election the trustee elected one of their number president of the board who constituted a body corporate and politic under the name and style of the President and Trustees of the town of Huntsville. Said corporation to have a common seal and to be perpetual in them and their successors. The corporation was limited to a tax of twelve and a half cents in the hundred dollars unless increased by vote of the property holders. They were also impowered to levy a tax on all carts, drays and wagons and other vehicles for transportation used for commissions or hire in the town. A lso to apoint a check of corporation and the market and publish their laws and ordinances by inserting in a newspaper or posting in a conspicous place. By act of Nov. 16th 1818 the following lots of residents N of Holmes St. along extension of Meridian Road and Green St. were included in the corporation lots of Alisha B. Clark, Alex A. Campbell, Wm. W. Harris, Francis Newman, Fleming Ward, Daniel Jere Murphey, Nicholas Sheffield, Clark Andrew, Cross, William Steilman, and Thornton H. Cook which was the first addition to the original corporation. In Dec. the limits were extended to a quarter of a mile leaving out the part of the lands of Thomas and William Brandon from the corporate limits and about the same time John Read, Jose Clay and Henry Stokes were appointed additional Commissioners for the City to fill vacancies made in the body since the act of 1809- The legislature of 1843 - 44 extended the limits of the city to half a mile each way making the corporation contain one square mile and the name and style of the body, Politic was changed to

present style of the Mayor and Aldermen of Huntsville and the corporal offices were to be elected by the Mayor and Aldermen. There were four wards established and eight Aldermen to be elected as at present and there was no material change until the act of the last legislature of 1882-3 extending the Mayors term to two years and requiring one half the Board of the Aldermen to hold over so arranged that one-half of the Aldermen at the April election were elected for a long term of four years and the other half for two years. So that after April 1886 one half of the Aldermen term will expire over two years and the other half will hold over so that at the election in April 1885, one half the Board will be elected for a four years term and in 1883 the other half for a like term and so on. The water works are under control of the Corporation as the city at an early day took control of them and has since collected all revenue derived from them. The Market House, Calaboose and Engine House were built on the N. part of lot No. 70. After the great fire in 1880 and is a creditable and substantial edifice. At the commencement of the war the corporation owned a handsome property in drays, mules, horses and slaves and they had done an immense amount of work in improving the city which they were able to do with unusual facility on account of the abundance of good limestone on the ground and the fine quarry of paving stone on the part of Monte Sano called Round Top from which has been nearly all the paving material in the City. From the abundance of fine limestone, sand, and clay in vicinity of the city for brick work and the magnificient growth of Cedar and Poplar the buildings of the city are of the most substantial character and the best workmanship. The old brick Court House of 1819 is said to have been a large convenient building and it was so much elevated above the size of the present building that when the grading for the present building was progressing and had been finished except tearing down and grading the site of the old building it stood on a mound some eight or ten feet higher than the grade for the new building. In leveling the streets the rock was utilized for McAdamizing, burning into lime and when quarries in proper shape for dressing into shape and turning into buildings materials a large protion of the old buildings have beams and rafters of fine red cedar of a size and quality that could hardly be obtained now any where in the south. The style of architecture of that day was massive and strong rather than airy and graceful and many

of the so old buildings are still standing and seemingly as good as when first built. The Southern part of town has had long immunity from fire as it is said there never has been a serious conflagration on Commercial Row and fires have been of rare occurance out in the direction of Popos Hill along Franklin Street and Adams Avenue and in the direction are still to be seen the square massive roomy buildings that were the ideal of our ancestors. The abolution of slavery has of itself exerted considerable influence on our archectural taste. Formerly the wealthier classes who erected fine buildings had a horde of slaves at their beck and while the head of the family usually had rooms on the lower story yet their guests and younger members of the family dwelt in the upper rooms and servants were flitting constantly up and down the broad stairways day and night attending to the wants of the family and their guests. The servants room, kitchen and dining room, dairy and etc were at a convenient distance from the main dwelling to remove from them the heat and annoyance of these necessary appendages. Land was cheap and ample space allowed for ventilation and everything looked cool and comfortable. But in the present age when labor is so precarious and the mistress of the family never sure at what house she may be left at least for a time to attend to her household work, people in erecting their houses look at the practical side of the matter hence we see a tendency to one story edifices with wings or an L including Kitchen and dining room and well house and a servants room all under the same roof all as near the same level as possible. Wood and water convenient and everything under the same roof makes the housekeepers duties much lighter than if they had to be performed in buildings built on the old slave-holders model of archectural. Thus our southern towns are gradually losing their old massive look and old solid-brick buildings come down for some reason and two or three cool low cottages ornamented as to Frieze and Columns with fancy wood work and probably decorated in a variety of colors slender iron or wooden columns take the place of the old Doric Columns and Capitals, Timber grows scarcer and dearer. The styles grow more light and airy and the time is not far distant when iron in a thousand beautiful forms and contrivances will work as great a difference in our buildings as we now see between the heavy wooden bridges of our ancestors and the strong, light and graceful structures

from the short span leaving some little water course to the great wonder of the world between New York and Brooklyn. There are many interesting subjects connected with the City of Huntsville that will be treated hereafter in the history of the County and as the real intention of these articles relating to our town and village was to convey some idea of their settlement and progress until within the memory of the present generation I have already transgressed my intended limits. The press the Ministry and the bar, the noted mechanics and farmer, schools and Churches and the Charitable and benevolent associations afford endless material for sketches and the difficulty lies in making judicious choice of material in such a great abundance. But as the early settlements generally had som center round which they resolved that generally assumed the shape of a town or village so it appears to me that in sketching the settlement of these little towns I can give the clearest idea possible of the settlement of the County. I have already given a cursorsory glance of how the settlements were massed at an early day and I now propose to show how these differences in settlements partly developed the little towns in their midst.

HAZEL GREEN

The map of old Madison shows that in 1809 there was a considerable body of land taken up on the Meridian line between Briar Fork and Barren Fork and here on both sides of the road in sec. 19 and 24 a town with several stores two hotels and several groceries was started soon after the land sales in 1809 at an early day the Winchester and Athens Road was opened which was a main highway of Travelers going from Tenn. westward and down the Meridian Pike came the wagons to and from from Huntsville to Nashville and back. And as the greater part of the merchandise brought to Huntsville came that route it soon became a lively flourishing place. Charles Cabiness, William Estil Tallioferro, Dr. Davis, Samuel Allen, Richard Cottsel and many others who were men of culture and wealth settled in the beautiful and fertile region in and around Hazel Green. Mr. McCohee built a mill two miles north on Fowlers creek. Hazel Green became a well known resting place for travelers and when incorporated in 1821 it had

three or four hundred people in its corporate limits. The corporation extended from the south bound and of the sections named near where Robert Irwin then had a store and run north, half a mile and two hundred yards east and west on each side of the road. For a period of nearly thirty years Hazel Green was a considerable town, but the splendid lands in its neighborhood became the property of capitalists who gradually crowded out the white population and brought negroes instead. These large property holders were generally enemies of little towns because they demoralized the negroes and thus it happended that when the Townsends bought up the Country round old Hazel-Green that McDavid mills (Old McGees) became a stopping point and round Mound Inn kept by Mrs. High Brown Soutt the much married woman for the travelers over the western road and the cotton patch encroached on town lot after town lot until the whole place was at length absolved. The Townsends died just about the time of the war and the lands were divided into small tracts and sold to white settlers, the white population is gradually working its way back and there is a probability of a revival of the town as or near McDavids old mill where there is a store. The Townsends cleared up all the fine level lands along the road leaving their timber on the broken lands on creek East of the road so that the purchaser of a small tract on the road would have to go two or three miles for timber but this is a desirable country in other respects and would be a desirable location for a large colony that by turning their attention to stock and grain for which this County is specially adopted would prosper and make this one of the most desirable and valuable portions of the western part of the County.

-------- Morridianville--------

Between the Briar Fork and Beaver Dam Creek extend from their junction westward is a large extent of valuable and fertile lands. Here in 1809 was a large settlement attached thither by the fertility of the soil and about the year 1838 a town begins to spring up that developed into a place of considerable trade, I do not find any act of incorporation for this place. Joseph Fenwick first laid off Town lots for sale and in 1818 owned the larger part of what is the present town. Around this place at an early date congregated many men of wealth and influence among whom may be mentioned Polish

Horton, Thomas McCrary, Josiah Battle, David Humphrey, the Strongs, Darwins, Cornelius Pope, the Eldridges, Pruitts, Douglaps, Thompsons, and a host of others who were foremost in developing this fine region. Before the war the population was increasing and in a few years many of the wealthy planters in the vicinity would have settled in the town for convenience of churches and schools and would have built up a flourishing town but the war destroyed its prospects and for many years there has been but little change in the place for better or worse. One noteworthy fact is that the descendants of the old settlers have to a considerable extent clung to their heritage in the soil probable for the very reasons that there are few better localities all things considered than this, and there certainly are no better citizens to be found in the County than the liberal high minded and hospitable community in and near this little village. Meridianville was so called from the fact that it is situated immediately on the Basis Meridian of survey of North Alabama. Like all other localities in which there is a large area of fine open land its neighborhood was taken up in large plantations and the negroes left there by the war makes a large majority of the voters being in the proportion of nearly three to one but the relations between them and the white populations have usually been of the most amirable character.

Brownsboro and Maysville

About Maysville and Old Brownsboro were some of the earlier settlements in the the County many of them coming here as early as 1807. About that time John Lamberson, Soloman and Allen Messengle, Charles McCartney and George Taylor began the settlement on Flint from the Bellefonte Road down the river to present site of Brownsboro. The Scotts and Hewletts came soon after and John Brown also who first built a mill about half a mile above old Brownsboro which he afterwards carried down to the Brownsboro mill site and sold to Robert Scott. These old settlers expected to build a considerable town about Scotts Mill Dam and Charles McCartney laid off the western portion of his tract on west side of the river opposite about midway between the depot and railroad ridge into town lots from which the town of Brownsboro began which was incorporated in

the year 1825. In December 1820 the Flint River Navigation Company was incorporated of which the following well known Citizens of that day were incorporators to wit. Fleming Jordon, George Taylor, John Sprawl, Stephen Pond, John P. Brown, James McCartney, John Grayson, Dave Reeves, David Walker, Ebenezer Byram, Stephen McBroom, William Derrick and David Cobb. They received authority to supply donations and subscriptions to the opening and improvement of navigation from Captains Scotts Mill to mouth of Flint River and it was made a misdemeanor to obstruct the river in any manner. A large freighting business was done from this place in bateaux or keel boats carried to the mouth of the river and their loads transfered to the big Broadhorns as they were called, that carried three or four hundred bales of cotton. The keel boats carried from sixty to eighty bales and the boats were pulled back up stream which was very easily done when Tennessee River was at a high mark as it made eddy water nearly to Woods Mill and the rest of the way a pole was used on the starboard side while landward a man with a hook attached to a long pole grabbed a limb or sapling on the back and walked the boat up its full length from point to rear when he would let loose and again go to the point passing a man who had taken hold when he let loose and thus they walked the boat upstream at the site of about three miles an hour. Brownsboro soon was doing considerable business and continued to flourish until about the year 1840 when the Section as it was called began to grow into a town. It was at the south west corner of the 16th Section or School lands and the lots immediately south and west were first owned by Ebenezer Byram and William Derrick and about the year 1838 a tanyard and store were put up at Maysville and several houses were built south of the 16th. Section. In 1840 Love and Beaver were merchandising there and also William Stewart who put up a Cotton Gin on the Deposit Road. In the course of time the Flint River Navigation Company disappeared and Mill Dams were put into Flint River at points further south and the Cotton went to Paint Rock or was hauled to Nashville. Many of the old citizens left for other localities among others William Vietch and William Echols who merchandyzed there for some time. The mill at Bell Factory were erected and Brownsboro declined steadily until it was all bought up with

the exception of two or three houses and the lands put into cotton. Among the prominent citizens who once lived then were Dr. Wm. Anderson and James Cant who went to the neighborhood of Holly Springs Mississippi and were prominent men in that community Benj Wm Lawler settled in the neighborhood about the year 1818 on a forty acre tract of land and at his death owned a large plantation round old Brownsboro. When the sixteenth section ~~of Maysville is situated and laid off town lots and was~~ sold Wm. Stewart and B. B. Nunnally bought the greater section on which part of Maysville is situated and laid off town lots and the places was incorporated under the name of Maysville, and soon grew to its present dimensions and it has about held its own until the present time. It is a pleasant healthy place with an abundance of fine water and is the center of an orderly farming comunity. Wm Stewart is the only survivor of the pioneers of the place. Brownsboro has moved to the east side of the river at the depot and a large amount of cotton is shipped annually from that point. Two miles south of Brownsboro was the limit of the old settlements and many of them were among the oldest in the County.

New Market-----

Joseph Crinor, Isaac Crinor, Stephen Mc Broom Samuel Davis, and Lahan Rice settled in the vicinity of New Market in 1805 and 6. Garland Miller came there about the year 1803, but for many years there was no settlement at New Market. The first voting place was old Hillsboro and remained there until after the State was admitted into the Union. George Smith and Lahan Rice entered the lands on which New Market stands about the year 1809. The Whitmans, Rices and Millers were pioneers in the town of New Market which was incorporated in the year 1838. The Bayless Braggs Clums Bakers Hambricks and Geo. T. Jones were early settlers in the vicinity of the present town, whose descendants still live in the neighborhood and are an orderly industrious and thrifty people. New Market has been a thriving prosperous little town for more than forty years and has increased in population and trade since the war it is in the midst of a fine farming region has a flourishing Academy a fine massonic hall and church and many neat and tasty private residents. The land in the neighborgood is generally owned by small families who turn their

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attention to stock and grain and are in a prosperous condition. This is the trading point for the occupants of the fertile lands on Mountain Fork and Upper Hurricane and it is quite probable that the local trade to New Parker will keep the town in its present flourishing condition. The town was again incorporated in 1868 with local prohibition which has contributed on a remarkable degree to the peace and prosperity of the town.

Extinct Villages------

I have noticed briefly the towns in the original County of Madison and would be rejoiced to give fuller details of their growth and progress. As there are many interesting reminiscences connected with them from which could be obtained the material for an entertaining volume but would exceed the scope intended in my sketches of our old County towns ..But before I take up again the history of the County there are a few towns that once existed either in the imagination of the projector or had their brief existence and then disappeared. While Brownsboro and Hazel Green preserve their names though with some change in locality the villages I propose to preserve from oblivion. In the settlement of the County many settlers from the State of Tennessee came down and settled along the present deposit road as far down as Brownsboro. The Settlement also tended Eastwardly from the Merridian road in the direction of Flint River bridge about which a large emigration gathered about half a mile up Barren Fork from its mouth or junction with Briar Fork at the bridge. Mr. Hardan built a mill where in 1812 a voting place was established. Near there on the highlands south of the river was laid off a town to be called Manchester which in the course of time was known as Clascocks and if ours had been a manufacturing community there would doubtless have been a flourishing town established at that point. But the Bell Factory company took down the old mill and and the settlement was broken up. Yet the day may come when the splendid water power in its vicinity will be utilized and a New Manchester may spring from the ashes of the old It is singular that while there is not half a dozen settlers in the Country that can recollect that such a town was ever even contemplated yet any one who is curious to locate

Winchester can do so on any large map of the State where it is invariably seen in l[illegible] letters on Winchester Road just a short distance eastwardly from the Forks of the river In my sketch of New Market I have already mentioned Hillsboro as the original voting place for that part of the County and any one who will look at the County Map will find that the Hillsboro Road leaves Winchester Road at Mr. Rogers Goes by the Blankenship place and Moores Mill just beyond which it turns east from the Sulphur Spring Road by Dr. Macons and Wm. M. Stones crosses the river at Bledsoes ford thence by old Bethoney ~~ski~~ skirting the Sledge place and crossing Hesters creek near the line between Tall[illegible] and Shaker, ~~Somewhere about the old mill~~ Some where about the old mill on the side of the ridge was Hillsboro hard to locate correctly and remembered by few. Madison and Cross Roads was also the site of a considerable village then at the crossing of the Elkton and Limestone roads when the father of Jas. B. Ellis the present owner kept public house and where there was generally one or two stores. Half a mile this side of Whitesburg just above high water mark was laid off a considerable town by old man Jacobs Captain of a Militia Company and whose house was the first voting place established in that part of the County. Liberty had a short existence and took the liberty to move to the river and changed its name to Whitesburg that still lives and flourishes. But west of Blue Spring Creek near Henderson Brandons mill Henry Bibb, James Barclay and others laid off a suburb to Huntsville to which I have already alluded under the name of Mechanicsville. A summer resort on Monte Sano was a favorite project of many of the old settlers culminating in laying off the town of Nipduta in 1832 lots were sold near the famous cold [illegible] spring and several excellent house erected. The Monte Sano Town Turnpike was run to the Cold Spring and but for the war this would soon have been a flourishing summer resort. The Town as laid off contained eighty acres and near it was the Rowe Academy built of Mountain sandstone where James Rowe kept up a female seminary for many years. It is quite likely that the turnpike will be repaired and a hotel built at no distantday for it is made accessible and convenient it will be one of the most charming and healthy summer resorts in the South.

Triana----------

Crabbs afterwards Fletcher Ferry on the County line was and old crossing place on Tennessee River before the Whites occupied the County and one of the first roads opened by legislature encatment was up the county line to Burruss Store eighteen miles north from Tennessee River from Crabbs Ferry it was intended to open a road to Tuscaloosa but there was no favorable site for a settlement in the neighborhood and there was a road from Trianna down the river to this Ferry. The Chickasaws at the beginning of the century had a settlement at the Big Prairie near Mrs. Rice's place which was the only trace of a large settlement in the county. Were the white people, when they explored the county found in the midst of an [illegible] forest growth a tract of land in a circular form as clear of timber and undergrowth as a town meadow where Indian traditions say was once a large Indian Town known as Chickasaws old fields to the first explorers of this region. The valuable farming region shown in Map No 2, as I have already stated was taken up rapidly and generally by men with large capital. One of the first acts of the legislature dated November 13, 1819. About one year after the land sales, was the incorporation of the town of Triana. The corporate limits was as follows: Beginning at mouth of Indian Creek and running up its east side to mouth of Barren (Fork), thence west to West Boundary of Tr. Sec. 32, thence south to a point in Tennessee river fifty yards from low water mark, thence with the river to its beginning. Henry Chambers, William Adair, John T. Lindsay and Thomas Bibb as trustees for the town entered the west part of Sec 22, and Tr. Sec 27, containing three hundred and nineteen acres and a town was laid off in 1830 by H. Saroni a well known engineer who drew an excellent map of the New Town. On 31st. of Dec., The Indian Creek Navigation Company was incorporated with LeRoy Pope, Thomas Fern, Stephen D. Ewing, Henry Cook and Samuel Haggard as commissioners. A stock company to receive subscriptions of stock in shares of fifty dollars. This company when the sum of ten thousand dollars was subscribed were to elect a President and proceed to open Indian Creek from Huntsville to Arianna. Whenever the creek was made navigable for boats drawing ten inches of water they were empowered to re-

ceive toll at the rate of two dollars per ton on freight, but all freight from Droutte (Huttons Mill) was free. Dr. Thomas Fearn was President of the board of Commissioners and was the leading spirit in the enterprise. It was the object of this company to construct a canal from Huntsville to Trianna or so far as was necessary to open Indian Creek to Navigation. And the Canal was dug from Huntsville to the mouth of Byrds Spring Creek below Acklins Mill. Although the enterprise was prosecuted with energy and scintific ability. Yet after the company had preserved in their undertaking until some of them were driven to the verge of bankruptcy, it was ascertained that it was unpracticable or at least not a profitable venture and the work was finally abandoned. Indian Creek by the accession of Hurricane Fork at Laniers, Byrds Spring at Acklens, and Barren Fork half a mile fromTennessee River carries a large body of water to Tennessee River. But it was found very difficult to obtain sufficient water even with a system of expensive locks to run boats to the Tennessee bottom. And after that the back waters in the winter and spring required considerable labor in dredging and deepening a regular boat channel. The wealthy and enterprising population at the time in and near Trianna before railroad transportation had been thought of could fairly presume that a large cotton point could be established at Triana and that a town rivalling or surpassing Huntsville would probably find there its location. There were many circumstances justifying this opinion. In the first place on the establishment of successful navigation from Huntsville by Indian Creek, it would become the point of transfer of a large amount of the Cotton and Goods for the greater portion of the County. The town was finally located on an elevated point with the base facing the river and sloping back over a level surface of fine fertile land. The country north from the river and up and down some called one of the finest agricultural regions in the state and the parties engaged in the enterprises were possessed of ample means to build up and improve the town. The lots were not placed regularly in the market until the year 1832 and they sold at exorbitant prices. The lots on the river had a point of ninety nine ft. on the str. and run back one hundred and ninety eight ft. and choice lots ranged from seven hundred to fourteen hundred dollars each. These lots were not bought on idle speculation but for permanent envestment by some of the clearest headed business men of the st., among whom were Dr. Davis Moore, John J. Winston, Samuel Brock and Saml. Bryan. The lots outside of the sq. made in the corporal limits were termed outlots varying in quantity from three to thirty acres and sold at exorbitant prices. Many of the wealthy farmers around Triana bought lots with the intention of building and settling there.

The sale of the town lots amounted to near one hundred thousand dollars & its population must at one time have been over a thousand. The failure of the Indian Creek and construction of the Whitesburgh turnpike were the first of the serious blows to the New City. The postponement of the Muscle Shoals and the inaugur tion of railroads completed its ruin. Lawrence Banks of Decatur a man long past his four score years, is as far as I can ascertain the last survivor of the public spirited men who founded Triana. Among the enterprising men who cast their fortunes with the New City were Morriweather Lewis, J. C. Dillon and the three Toneys, Harris,Caleb, and Ed. Toney who were brothers. It is not often we find three of the same family gifted with the energy and capacity exhibited by those three m. n. They came here about the year 1818 when Harris Toney the oldest was a young man, and rapidly accumulated property in the merchandise and cotton business. Harris Toneys career was short but exceptionally brillant. Though a remarkably successful merchant and making money rapidly in merchandise and trade yet he turned his attention to farming and invested his ample means in land and negroes of which profession he was a progressive and enthusastic man and soon became a representative in that profession. His farm management was a model of system, economy and judicious expenditure of money for improvements. He was far in advance of his time in his methods and ideas of farm development. But while he was accumulating a large property in land and negroes and was laying plans so extensive that they would have over shadowed all other agriculture enterprises of his time he was cut off by disease and died in the very prime of manhood and Mrs. Goons and Mrs. Barclay inherited his lands. Caleb Toney, also was a man of similiar business and capacity known and respected by all men for his sterling honesty and purity of character and died in the prime of life. Col. Ed Toney, I believe the youngest of the three and the one best known to the present generation, though said not to have been as brilliant a man as Harris Toney, yet he was one of the best business men of his day. He was a man of excellent judgment with an uncommon portion of that useful faculty known as stong common sense which enabled him to steer clear of the many financial disasters that overtook his contemporaries and it is said that in his whole life he was never known to make a financial blunder. The war of course took Jo, knowares or if he foresaw coming disaster he was too good a patriot to shirk the result. While he was stripped of his slaves and his lands run to waste yet at the close of the war he was out of----------

debt with a small capital and commenced again with the energy of youth to repair his broken fortune and embarking on the mercantile business at Triana he was very successful and if he had been a younger man would in the course of a few years have more than repaired his losses. He died in the year 1877 aged over seventy years. T The oldest of the settlers living near Triana is W. W. Watkins who is over eighty and h has lived in the vicinity of Triana for near sixty years. Though cause that no man could foresee blasted the prospects of Triana yet when ever Tennessee River is opened to Navigation which now is a question of a few years time. The beautiful highland on the river bank and which we now know as "The Ancient City of Triana", will rise from the ashes of the past and become a town of some ~~improv-~~ importance even if it never realizes the dream of the man who saw the coming Metropolis of North Alabama in ~~the~~ their little City.

New Hope(Old Vienna)

I have already stated that the South Eastern portion of the County was taken up in small farms generally by men of moderate means. That portion of the County south of Keels Mountain and East of Flint River never come into Market until the year 1830 and though the lands had been ceded for many years yet all the population were squatters and about 1820 and 1825 a kind of trading place was located at Vienna, called Clouds town from old Mr. Cloud who first commenced business there and afterwards went to Clouds Cove on Tennessee River where he entered a valuable tract of land. This section was first in Jackson then in Decatur and finally restored to Madison in the year ~~1818~~ 1824. The old Deposit Road was opened from Winchester to Deposit Ferry in 1813 and passed through the present town and as this became a regular thoroughfare George Russell built a tavern here before Alabama was admitted into the Union and this is said to have been the first house built in the old town. This part of the County was in t the twelve mile square on Cherokee Reservation to which I have already alluded and f from various causes the sale of the lands were retained until 1830 when Robert Owens and James Mc Cartney entered the lands of the City and Robert Owens soon afterwards laid out the City lots on each side of the present Deposit Road south beyond the

spring. Among the first to set up in the new town were John Kinbrough a merchant well and favorably known to the old citizens and William Stone who built the tan yard and who now lives in the city of Talladega. It is said that his brother Geo. W. Stone present judge of the Supreme Court was in some kind of business there before he wandered further south in pursuit of fame and fortune. The town was first incorporated as Vienna in the year 1832. And as the population thronged to the new country surroundering it a brisk business sprang up. I. D. Mann and John Ledbetter were conducting prosperous mercantile establishments there at the beginning of the war. Their customers generally men of moderate means, punctual in their dealings and consequently their business was a safe and profitable one. During the Civil War this unfortunately became a debatable land between the Federals from the line of the M. C. R. R. and irregular Confederated or as they were termed bush whackers and the people suffered from both sides until at length the Federals utterly destroyed the town and nearly all the dwellings out to Woods Mill. When the soldiers returned from the war they found a forest of chimneys marking the site of Vienna and where they had formerly seen good comfortable farm houses along the roads leading in that direction they generally found rude cabins perched round the base of the tall stone chimneys and all round for miles was open land as the fences had also disappeared. But the brave fellows who survived the war went to work with a will to repair the waste places enclosed their lands, built new houses and in an incredibly short space of time the old town was rebuilt and has nearly attained its ancient limits. There is a Vienna in S. Ala.,And the post Office has always been called New Hope to prevent confusion and when the town was incorporated in 1881 it was formerly called the town of New Hope.

WHITESBURGH

I have already alluded to the extinct town of Liberty half a mile this side of the town proper on the river bank. It received the name of Whitesburgh from James.White of Virginia who purchased the fine farm on both sides of the river near the ferry. In the old Flat boat times Whitesburgh was a place of considerable trade and the seriousness of the difficulty at the river bank is the habit of the river at flood tide of taking possession of the lower story of their business houses. James C. Loyd, Asa Shelton, Joel R. Love and Joseph, A Brown are old business men of this place. Jas. C. Loyd is dead, Asa Shelton went to Nashville while Joel R. Love and Joseph A. Brown are still in business there. The construction of the M & C. Rail

road diverted cotton transportation from the town and business declined and like Triana it waits the opening of the river for its future. Whitesburgh first known to the white people as Dittoe landing was one of the first points in the bend of the Tenn. from the fact it was considered about the line between the Chickasaws and Cherokees and settlements somewhere near the town on the river when the County was first settled this was the port of entry for the boatmen of the Tenn. for flour and potatoes and fruit. There was scarcely any wheat raised in the County at this time in fact it had not dawned on the minds of the people that this was a fine wheat region and there was great scarcity of machinery for the manufacture of the wheat crop so that a large population of the flour used came from the head waters of Tennl River. I suppose they got putting bad flour on their customers for in the year 1816 a flour inspector was appointed at Dittos landing by legislature enactment whose duty it was to inspect all flour landed and brand its grade on the barrels fro which he received the sum of six and a quarter cents per barrel which in those days of low wages yeilded him a considerable income as there were many thousand barrels landed at Whitesburgh during the year. How long this office was continued and who was the inspector I cannot ascertain the office probably went out with the Territorial Gov. Here also was the rendezvous of the river pilots among th most noted of whom were Webster Johnson and Clark they here boarded the broad horns at high tide and piloted them through the shoals, got off at Waterloo and returned by land to Whitesburgh. Somewhere in the shoals there is a rough point of rocks involving a perilous turn that was called Johnsons Rock from the fact that Johnson there lost his life by being thrown against the rock and killed. His steering oar became entangled against some obstruction and threw him head foremost out of the boat against the rock. Vast quantities of lumber was also brought down the river from the Tenn., saw and brought to Huntsville. Whitesburgh saw its most prosperous days from the completion of the Turnpike to the construction of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad when it----------

began to decline and since that time there has been but little change in the town. There is no record showing that the town was ever incorporated.

Madison--------

When the Memphis and Charleston Railroad was completed in the year 1856 a depot was established near the center of Sec. 16 T. 4 R. 2 W on the lands of James Clemens Thomas J. Clay was appointed depot agent and built a house there in the year 1857. George W. Martin came there soon afterwards and built a house in the year 1858 James Clemens laid off some town lots and in 1859 he corrected his first survey as the lots did not front square with the railroad and made a new survey containing about fifty lots fronting 66feet and running back 198 ft. containing each 3/10 of an acre he sold many of them and the town was rapidly increasing in population when the war stopped its progress James Clemens died about the close of the war and Robt. J. Sprigins extended the survey so as to include about fifty acres and in 1869 sold them at administrators sale. They sold at fair prices and in three or four years a handsome village was built that is now the second in population and trade in the County. A large amount of cotton mostly raised by the negro tenants on the large plantation was shipped from. And the Fletchers Hopking W. T. Garner, George W. Martin and James M. Bibb were merchandizing here. Walter and Thos. B. Hopkins soon became leading merchants of the town and have retained their position to the present time. Its citizens were men fully imbued with the spirit of modern progress and as a large majority of them now reside there and are well known to our people I leave it to some some future chronicles to speak in fitting terms of their intelligence enterprise patriotism and unstinted hospitably.

Curleysville--------

In describing the rise and progress of Madison I have also outlined the thriving Village of Curleysville eighteen miles East of Huntsville and one mile east of

for two or three years was Coles Spring in Jackson County but about 1850 they brought the water from a fine spring on lands of W. R. Curley in pipes to a large water tank at present site of Curleysville and the place was known as Curleys Tank. Soon after the war a depot was built here and one or two stores went up near the premises. Frank B. Curley and E. F. Walker now County Commissioner inaugurated a variety of enterprises that gradually built up F. B. Curley put up a steam gin, and E. F. Walker developed a large lumber trade here in cross ties and cedar lumber, these and other enterprises of a kindred character furnished employment for many men and circulated money among them and there is more real progress and more flattering indication of an increase in population and business there than any little town north of Tenn. River on the line of the M & C Railroad. The business men of the town are without scarcely an excepting energetic, shrewd and progressive men and deserve great credit for the success that has attended their efforts to build up a lively prosperous village. But we all know them well and to speak in commendation of them is superfluous. Curleysville was incorporated in the year 1882.

Madison County (Topography)

The northern and Northwest portions of the County about the head waters of Flint is somewhat broken especially near the streams that traverse the section. From Fennels mill at the Junction of Barren and Mountain Fork to the mouth of Flint is nearly due south, the meridian passing Fennels Mill striking Tenn. River about two miles east of the mouth of Flint. This main trunk as it might be called has only one important tributary on the east Hurricane Creek but on the W is Briar Fork which again dovides making Beaver Dam, Barren Fork and its tributary. These branches of Flint are of extraordinary length to their size and average a general western course. Briar Fork, Beaver Dam and Barren Fork all crossing the meridian road and running a S. W. course towars Flint. Thus it happens that Flint River resembles and old forest elm with the Eastern side pruned to a single long limb while the long western branches reach out to a length equal to the main trunk. Flint and its tributaties water, the Eastern and Northern portion of the County except a small curve made by Limestone Creek in the Northwestern part. The Country is of slaty formation with here and there oil indications and as I have above stated even broken many small streams from fine Freestone springs clear as crystal and icy cold. From the highlands along the Tennessee line there is a gradual and considerable decrease in level S. to the Tennessee bottom the current of the streams rapid and with millrond

facilities would be valuable for manufacturing and mills as there are scores of valuable sites with fine water power scattered over the Northern and eastern portions. The fine water power, excellent drainage and pure air and abundant timber in this region more than make up for the sterility of the soil of those highlands and if population increases in its present rates the day is not far distant when this will be a valuable and prosperous part of the County. Southward between these main branches of Flint River there are many extensive areas of fine level fertile lands especially around and west of old Hazel Green and Meridianville making some of the most desirable agricultural lands in the County. Between the waters of Flint and Limestone in the Western portion of the County and the Source of the stream that gather into Indian Creek emptying into Tennessee River reaching nearly to Madison are the largest portion of the Barrens thinly settled and soil from alternating with yellow clay ridges and white clay flats passing Madison we strike the Tennessee Valley land reaching from the County line Eastward to the Mountain which, with the exception of low mountain range near Madison are generally level, densely populated and very fertile . These lands once of the very best quality have by a long succession of cotton crops have lost a large proportion of their original productive power but they have a good clay foundation and a few progressive farmers in this region have proved that with a little trouble and expense they can be restored to their original fertility. The dividing line between Madison and Jackson is the main ridge of the Cumberland Mountains down to Keels Mountain and Paint Rock River, the general direction of which is North and South as the Northeastern and South Eastern corners of the County are nearly on the same meridian but Hurricane Creek comes from the East and near its head drains a County making a deplection of three or four miles eastward, making a large curve into Jackson. From near New Market there is a succession of low ridges between the waters of Flint and forming Hurricane Valley on the east and reaching down into----------

Gurleysville where Hurricane turns westward and runs along side of Curleys Mid[illegible] the Flint River with Ashburns Cove South of it to Keels mountain and Flint Bottom. North Gurleysville is situated on East margin of this cove and John [illegible]. Grayson at base of Keels Keels Mountain on Eastern extremity. An inspection of the map of New Madison will give a clear idea the topography of this region. It is very broken made up [illegible] most degree of long curves between spurs from the main range has fine clay soil abundance of water and timber for farming purposes and is better adopted to stock and grain than to Cotton. Wells Cove on Mountain Fork Bakers on Hurricane Charms Cove on Holders Branch Killins worth Cove on the Cove branch are the principal valleys east of the waters of main Stream of Flint River. Ashburns Cove is not a valley but a parallelogram from two to to three miles across from between Hurricanes and Keels mountain. The second main Mountain Range and the western limit of the mountainous regions a little North East of Huntsville and runs southward to Tennessee River two miles below Whitesburg. This Mt. runs between Huntsville and Flint River which varies from it from three to five miles but west of Huntsville there are Mountains spurs that tend [illegible] eastwest striking Flint River two miles below Brownsboro and making Childress Cove and the Northern limit of the Big Cove South of this Range and between the main Range and this which strikes the mountain two miles below Woods mill is the Big Cove is the Big Cove bound east by Flint River. The lands west to the mountains in the cove are considerably worn and need rotation of crops and rest the large body of land on Flint is comparatively newly opened and produces fine corps of grain and would make excellent pasture lands. Just south of Gurleysville Keels Mountain stands like an immense rampart across the part of the County East of the river reaching from Paint Rock to Flint River approaching at nearest point within half a mile of Paint Rock and sending out a point at John [illegible]. Grayson sloping to the waters edge of Flint. This Mountain including [illegible] spurs and cove round its base covers an area of about twenty five square miles that is a square with a side of about five miles in length the eastern side of its base is in Jackson County the line running on top of the mountain about a mile from foot of the cliffs until it strikes the [illegible], Indian boundary which follows one of its ridges to within half a mile of the corner of the County on Paint Rock River. There are several fine springs on the [illegible]

Land of the County. The flat pine lands are poor in quality with white clay soil and thinly settled. Along the mountain Ridges on the East where we find black Clay soil are the main settlement. All occupied by small farmers cultivating their own small farms and living comfortably on East side of Flint and North of Paint Rock are fine new botton lands generally owned by the settlers in the flat woods that generally frosh and yeild large grain crops. West of New Hope, Paint Rock and Flint tend westwards in nearly parallel lines going into Tenn. Flint River about four miles apart with a mountain ridge between them which runs close to Paint Rock to its mouth and through the Tennessee for two miles leaving a narrow short land along the banks of Paint Rock and Flint varying in width for half a mile to fifty yards which is first quality river lands after following Tennessee for two miles from mouth of Paint Rock down stream along high cliff along which sem points there is barely space between the cliffs and the river for a road. The mountain turns north from the river back for a mile and then turning south west leaving the fine body of river land known as Clouds Cove reaching from Cardners old mille to the mouth of Flint. Nearly all of which is owned by Dr. N. D. Richardson and the heirs of William Cloud. The lands near the mouth of Flint are owned by Joseph A. Brown, William D. Collins and the Cardner family and are equal in producing power to any lands in the south. The corn lands yield fifty or sixty bushell and the cotton lands near a bale to the acre and with unobstructed Navigation of Tenn. River would be enormously enhanced in value. From mouth of Flint to Logans where we cross a low ridge near the old county line to main body of the Tennessee lands and reach the western side of the dividing ridge running east of Huntsville are first the Cardner and then the Hobbs plantation. The most valuable portion of which is Hobbs, formerly Chickasaw Island in Tennessee River containing over three hundred acres of land of the very best quality. The mountain ridge has an area of table land on its summit of varying width that has but few settlements as it is cut by hollows on both sides and in some places is but fifteen or twnety yards in width in others reaching to half a mile. Water is very scarce near the summit of the ridge and the land except its timber is of but little value, Madison County is essentially an agricultural region. There are outcroppings of coal on Keels mountain, Monte Sano and the County line ridge. Monte Sano furnishes a considerable amount of coal to the city but could not be madeadequate for the wants of the citizens. There is one or two veins opened on Keels mountain and also near New Market and while capital and labor may at a day

develop a larger supply, yet it is not probable that the time is near when the coal could be profitably worked in competition with the rich Cahaba and Warrior Coal Fields of Middle Alabama. While there has been since the war a marked increase in our population. Yet there is room for many more. Aside from the manufacturing prospects for the county in the future and the utilization of our fine water power for such purposes the great want of the county is farmers owning small farms and in sufficient numbers the change and the present extensive system of culture looking to wide acre rather than to heavy pecuniary returns to the intensive system including a variety of crops careful and scientific culture devoting a much larger area to green crops and pasture and a much smaller area to raising corn and cotton. The man who can demonstrate the advantage of so handling the soil as to make three bales of cotton where we now make one and raising ten barrels of corn where now four are gathered will be the man who will give real progress to the County. Whatever we may say of advantages likely to accrue from other pursuits the cultivation and restoration of our lands are our only avenues to future prosperity.

------Climate------

The thirty fifth parallel of latitude is the Northern limits of Madison. The mildness of our winters and our pleasant summers have always been the great inducement to northern immigrants who find that they cannot have health and long life exposed to the long cold winters of higher latitude. It is true that we do not have in summer the pleasant sea breeze of the gulf, neither do we have their pestilential visitation nor their rainy disagreeable winters. The Pacific Coast with its climate not varying in some localities more than ten or fifteen degrees throughout the year would convey an idea of perpetual spring but it really has during the year a wet and a dry season which means a country of oasis and desert. Persons who are seriously threatened with pulmonary diseases in Florida, Texas and the west can find a climate superior to this for their peculiar maladies and in which they may restore their health but to a person enjoying average health and who seeks a county where he can industriously engage in out door occupation without injury to his health no Country can offer more advantages. Our tempertures rarely reaches over ninety in summer or to the zero point in winter and there are very few days during the

year that the weather interfered with their labors in field and farm. Many citizens of the north states habitually winter in North Alabama and find the climate most desirable. There has been considerable change in the seasons since the first settlement of the County. Our Springs are two or three weeks earlier and winter later and less rainfall than in former days which is owing to the declining of the forests. Our forefathers planted corn in the early spring in March, cotton about the last and generally had a killing frost gfrost before the tenth of Oct. Now very little corn is planted in March, cotton from the tneth of April tc 1st. of May. Summer frequently lingers until November with many seasons of fine pleasant weather until Christmas. While spring is mor capricious and changeable than formerly, Autumn is a prptracted season of pleasant fairweather, especially favorable for gathering the cotton crop. Our winters are milder and less changeable, there is very little snow which soon disappears and does not materially interfere with travel or labor while misamatic prevails from local cuases in some places yet the proportion of misamatic deseases is less than formally and our county generally healthier. The decay of the immense forests in clearing up our lands once was the source of wide spread bilious disorders. This cause has ceased with the disappearance of the old forest trees from our fields and streams. The draining is unobstructed and the health of the country materially improved. In the greater portion of the country there is no local cause fro sickness and the people very healthy. Along our creeks and rivers the sources of disease are being gradually removed by drainage of ponds and sloughs that fill up from the higher lands and become fit for cultivating. The deepest snow in the memory of the present generation on the 1st. of January 1878 averaged a depth of fourteen inches a depth of three or four inches is considered here a heavy snowfall. In the Autumn with but few exceptions we hafe Indian Summer in all its beauty after the slight October frosts have touched the folage. The mountains become variigated with natures choicest colors mellowed by the soft harbor atmosphere it lingers sometimes for weeks, frequently until near the close of the year. The woods,are in their most gorgeous colors until a heavy frost changes them like the touch of magic to the brown uniform here of the winters. Our winters are frequently of so mild a character

that sheep and cattle can live through them in fair condition with little or no help from the cribs and barns of their owners. It has been remarkable that summers of exceeding drought have generally been succeed d by mild winters that were of uncalculable advantage to farmers in keeping up their stock when their crops were cut short by unpropitious seasons. Upon the whole it has been clearly proved that our climate is peculiarly favorable to health and longevity and its k labor in the open air.

Productions

We occupy a medium between the tropical and polar producing region with some characteristc common to both. While we have a large area of good cotton land yet we cannot compare in this respect with the Mississippi cotton belt and probably our county would be in a better condition if we were to cease planting cotton. But with our dense colored population this is impracticable as the negro very seldom farms profitably except as a cotton planter. The change from cotton to grain and stock involves a change in the western portion a change of population and time alone can effect such a change. Even under the many disadvantages attending its culture the county averages bales worth at nine cents per pound. But our cotton of today is an insignificant plant in comparison with the cotton plant known to our forefathers. The first statement on record regarding the land of the Tennessee is in the American Gazette published in 1816 in which is a letter from James O. Crump a well know merchant of the city at that date. He considered it the finest agricultural country in the world and speaks of cotton growing eight, ten and even twelve feet high with trunks like forest trees and forming a magnificent cone of cotton bolls and white and red blossoms. He says that Madison County then produced ten thousand blaes of cotton but we must recollect that cotton bales of that day seldom reached three hundred and fifty pounds. Yet considering the population it was a magnificent harvest for a Country seven or eight years old and at twenty five cents per pound was a fine paying crop for the farmer and soon raised land to the highest prices ever known in the county. But the days of cotton in this county as a paying crop is past. And while there is no doubt that with a limited area and careful cultivation and heavy fertilizing our clay lands could still be made to produce cotton crops nearly equal to the product of former days

yet our farmers have to change their present methods and as it is questionable whether with the present supply and price for cotton it will ever be a good paying crop. Our soil is adapted to such great variety of agricultural production that it is manifestly to our interest to diversify our crops. I first take the census of 1850 when the slave population of the county was at its greatest proportion over the whites and when cotton was at the greatest ratio of production. Madison at that date was the first corn growing. Cotton on the county being largely over any other county. It was among the first in cattle, hogs, sheep, swine and wool. The wheat crop was small in comparison of the product of the present day and a large amount of flour was imported. If no wheat was exported the county could now produce sufficient for the demand in the county.

Rye, rice, Tobacco, beans and peas, Irish and sweet potatoes, Hay and butter was produced in large quantities but nearly all thes e products were used on the farms. Hemp and flax do well here. Orchard products that had a nominal value at that time have become a considerable source of revenue. The hay crop was large and in this was not reckoned corn fodder that was saved in immense quantities. To support a population of about 27,000 we raised corn to the value of one million of dollars. Cotton worth near a million of dollars. Beans and peas fifty thousand dollars, potatoes one hundred thousand dollars, cattle, sheep and swine one million of dollars, rice, hay, garden vegetables, tobacco, dairy products, honey and beeswax, hemp and flax and a variety of small fruits. But the money producing crop while slavery existed was cotton and corn and hogs. While cotton had reached so low a price that only those who raised supplies of every kind for their slaves on their plantations could realize any profit from their cotton crops while the producing of corn and meat and other plantation supplies began to make money. The immense crop of bread stuffs produced in the county did not suffice for the people and our Tennessee neighbors that supplied us with flour and meat reaped the profits of our cotton fields. The introduction of the sorgum cane has materially reduced the demand for sugar and molasses and the progress of the conversion of

its juice into sugar may make an entire revolution in the sugar supply. At the present there are many sources of revenue that were not known to the days of slavery. Many farmers who formerly sold nothing but cotton and would have scouted the idea of sending butter and chickens and eggs to market now pay the expenses of their families by sale of these articles. Though our fruit crop has become uncertain on account of liability to frost, yet in a good fruit season a large sum is realized on early fruit and dried peaches and apples and cider and vinegar. The cultivation of the vine tomatoes and small fruits generally for the canning trade is receiving no little attention and this industry is but in its beginning. Our mountains are especially adapted to such crops and the production of grapes and native wine will in a few years attain great importance. The experience of our farmers have taught that cotton alone will not bring them clear profits and that the only way to farm successfully is to raisesomething that will bring in money throughout the year and enable them to pay for what they buy for their families in cash or its equivalent in market profits. This has been the plan adopted generally by the farmers who have succeeded in buying land and paying for them. The great demand for vegetables and orchard products and modern improvements for their preservation and transportation make a market for every thing that can be raised in field or garden. Irish and sweet potatoes are now shipped in immense quantities northward and bring good prices. Peas, beans, peanuts, broom corn, tomatoes, chickens, butter, eggs, early peaches and apples dried and delicious fruits and vegetables. Sorgum sugar and molasses and many other sources of revenue too numerous to mention are the future possible elements of successful husbandry. A large part of our county is well adapted to the pasturage of cattle and we can raise an unlimited supply of hay and rough food for them. Some ten or twelve years ago a progressive farmer from Ohio Purchased two hundred and fifty acres of land in two miles of Huntsville for about ten dollars per acre. With the exception of a streak of white clay soil taking up some twnety five or thirty acres the land was red clay foundation very much exhausted by a long succession of cotton crops and with the

old fashioned farming system would not have paid expenses. It had neither building nor fences. Today it is a valuable tract land worth forty or fifty dollars per acre well fenced into fields of convenient size and has fine orchards and clover fields and yields large crops of oats from fifteen to twenty bushels of wheat per acre and outside of the enhanced value of the farm the owner has made a handsome net profit in farming. Besides his large crop of wheat and oats and clover the farmer sells orchard products. Peas, beans, potatoes, peanuts, cattle and sheep and swine and nursery plants. He and his sons have performed the greater part of the manual labor, they have made judicious use of fertilizing and built substantual barns and granaries and have so managed that there is scarcely an acre of unprofitable soil on the entire premises. I can site many small farmers who commenced on rented land with no capital and with very little stock who now owned comfortable homeswith good mule teams and an ample supply of farming implements of the best character. These men have raised cotton but they also raised plantation supplies. Sold butter and eggs and chickens and so managed that the cotton crop less the rent represented their nett profits. We do not need any more settlers to cultivate cotton on a large scale, we have too many farmers of that class already but we need a largely increased population of small farmers that raise their own supplies and a surplus to sell and who can also make a small crop of cotton on good land or on land enriched by fertilizers made on the farm. While the negroes as a rule are exclusively devoted to cultivation of cotton, yet there are some exceptions, one of the most notable of whom is Elias Donegan who is one of the most successful and progressive farmers in the county but he is not a cotton planter. Stock raishing will be one of the most lucrative and pleasant of our industries and many of our citizens who are men of capital are confering incalculable benefits on our people by the introduction of fine cattle and horses. There is no doubt that the value of our stock in the county has tripled within the last five years, not in number but in the intrinsic value of the stock. The necessities of our people and the high price of beef cattle have nearly denuded the country of the common grade cattle for beef but they will be replaced by stock of much greater.

value. The grangers gave considerable impulse in that direction but the North Alabama Agricultural Association has been and is now the great promoter of the taste for fine stock. The members of this association are the leading spirits in this pursuit and it is difficult to realize the advantages that will accrue to our County in the future from their enterprise that is now but entering on its true progress.

The political Carpet Bagger finds no longer a fruitful field for speculation. A growing distrust in his sincerity and an intimate acquaintance with crooked and dishonest ways has gradually dawned on the colored race and he is nearly an extinct species. The federal appointees as a rule are recognized as gentlemen and are some of them old and well known citizens. As a rule our people especially our farming population are liberal and tolerant towards settlers from other states and a man who does not make himself offensive by officious obtrusion of his doctrine or belief is left free to follow his business in peace and if his conduct shows him to be an honest good citizen, he is appreciated and respected in the community. There are hundreds of openings here for good farmers who want good farms and who understand their business. No matter from what section they come from they will find a soil and climate congenial to them. The farmers from the northern wheat regions will find that by the careful preparation and culture of his crop he can obtain an abundant harvest. The nurseryman and market gardener finds the soil that can be desired and all that is required on his part is skilful, culture, economy and industry. Our County is emphatically an agricultural one. There are no mines to develop no openings for great speculation. Noavenues to wealth by political preferment or opportunity to spoil and plunder the people. We have become educated in that particular and are able to take care of ourselves. What we offer is good soil that will repay capital and labor judiciery expended a diversity of products scarcely equalled in any county with a ready market. An orderly and peaceable community, a healthy climate and ample supply of timber and fine water and a cordial welcome to the honest and industrious farmers of every country.

The Early Settlers

A large part of the original settlers of Madison County were from Virginia and and Georgia and were far above the usual class of pioneers in a new Country. The wonderful accounts of the fertility of the bl- bend of the Tenn. brought many men of wealth and high culture here at a very early date and they found that the description of the Country had not been exaggerated. As Madison was the first settled portion of the state the settlers of this county gave to North Alabama that character for high culture and refinement which it has always had among other portions of the states. Many of those emigrants belonged to the oldest families in the state of Virginia and they all had the well known peculiarities of the Virginia land holding aristocracy. And formed the nucleus of the Anglo Saxon element in what our Northern neighbors termed the slave holding aristocracy. Many of the settlers from Georgia were original from Virginia among whom were the Moores, Jordans, Popes, Walkers and Coxs. We had none of the french and spanish creole type that formed the more southern type of the dominant race. Our forefathers brought with them the old Virginia state pride and were disposed to consider settlers of other states as belonging to an inferior race and in a general sense their claims to superiority were not without foundations. There is no race of men in all the world superior to the old Virginia Stock in all that forms a perfect type of manhood and the old settlers of Madison County were worthy representatives of the best elements of this grand old race. They were highminded, honest and pure men accustomed to rule who know how to command and to obey. They were proud of their ancestry and of their County and full of the Chivalry and patriotism of the era of the revolution. A large majority of them came here with ample means which they used with unstinted hand in the development of their adopted home.. Before the organization of the State Government they held the County offices managed the finances laid off and built up our beautiful little city and laid the foundation of our State Government. Yet their extravagent habits and peculiar ideas of business did not as a rule work to their pecuniary advantage and men from other states and nationalities reaped the harvest sowed by the old Virginian. As a rule they were planters with no knowledge of trade or merchandize and with a lofty contempt for these callings. They lorded it over their large slaves, plantations, managed public affairs with perfect honesty and consumate judgement spent their money recklessly. Strained their credit and fro-

quently were on the verge of bankruptcy. That part of the race who belonged to the professions of law and medicine generally rose to eminence because they had the calm self reliance the intellect discussion of character good judgment and unflagging industry that win success in a professional career. They also entered into politics and formed a respected part of the political body that until near the war guided the destinies of the Nation and laid the broad foundation of our national prosperity. But these characteristics are common to a large class of the Southern people and does not properly belong to any Countys history. From the settlement in 1806 to the formation of the State Government there was no politics to divert the peoples minds and very few local issues and this had a tendency to develop a clannish sentiment and while settlers from other states were disposed to ridicule the claim of the Virginians and entered into an trade or calling that promised fair returns. The Virginians were prejudiced to some extent and tolerated other people as foreigners or interlopers. But the despised race had habits of thrift and industry in ordinary channels of business and generally retaliated in a peculiar way. The old Virginia Gentlemean though highly educated in other respects was sometimes sadly ignored in business and inclined to make up by speculation what was lost in extravagent living and mismanagement and sometimes cards and horse racing brought him to ruin. Then his plodding neighbor who was making money by attending to business instead of to his family pedigree was generally on hand at sheriffs sale to buy him out. Yet, however kind and liberal he might be and no matter what amount of wordly goods he might accumulate he could probably obtain the friendship and respect of his reduced neighbor but in no possible way bring it about as to induce his aristocratic but unfortunate friend to regard him as an equal. The old Virginia settlers implanted here the peculiar virtues of their race. Their sagacity judgment and untiring industry have left lasting and imperishable monument to their memory in the laws and institutions of a County which they found a wilderness and which they made to bloom as the rose. Born and educated in a land of slave holders they were trained to command, trained to respect their elders and to reverence their law, they also knew how to obey legitimate authority. With them to will was to execute and with the brawney negro race the best working force in the world when under authority, forest disappeared at their bidding and fields of waving grain and cotton stood in their stead. Villages for their Negroes crowned the hills, barns and grainaries were constructed and soon filled to over flowing. The writings of Paulding and Kennedy and Simms give vivid portraitures of this noble race in Virginia and Maryland and Kentucky and it is a life like picture of them here in the earlier and better days of our people. The settlers of 1809 to 1819 had their reward in a long and prosperous life and died in peace surrounded by friends and relatives. Theirs was the crown of a busy and usefull life and a fitting close, to an honorable and glorious career. They left ample means for their families. Their sons and the husbands of their daughters occupied high places of political preferment, or were leaders in their professions. A happy and fortunate race, how different has been the fate of their sons and how little they deserved the misfortunes that were visited upon them. It was one of the misterious dispensations of providence beyond human kind that such sore calamities befell so pure and noble a race. We have heard so much disgusting hypocritical cant in thes e latter days about the course of slavery being visited on the descendants of the slave holders that if it were

true we should lose faith in divine Justice. The noble race of men who sent their sonssons to die for their country gave them to humor freedom and not to slavery. Generations untold had legalized the institution of slavery at the time of the Revolution. Slavery existed throughout the Union and the sighing of the Declaration of Independence that laid down the doctrine that all men were created free and equal would unanimously have voted down the proposition that the African is the equal of the Caucasian. It was their proud and lofty bearing their natural adaptation from birth and training to govern a cause in itself of grave offense to ignoble natures. A hatred for the slave holder personally and no inmate love for freedom or the slave that was the motive that inaugurated the war on the slave holder. The large foreign emigration to the north of an element profoundly ignorant of the workings of slavery in the South and knowing them only by highly colored protratitures from the writings of fanatics gave the North a preponderance that was unhesitatingly made use of to overwhelm the South. The sons of the old slaveholders died by thousands on the battle field their fathers staked out and lost all they gave their property and their children to a sacred cause and when all was lost in despair and humiliation, they died broken hearted. While overweening pride and ambition actuated a few but the many recognized the conflict as inevitable and it was inevitable. A delay in the conflict would have weakened the south and strengthened the North and a great mistake made by southern people was in the post ponement of the issue until the North grown too strong to make resistence to their encroachments possible/ The southern people were not responsible for the institution of slavery, their climate and soil had in the natural progress of events left slavery among them and if geographical position had made the North slave and the South free, they would have never have interfered with it but would have left it as a local question to be settled by the people of the States.

where slavery existed. Our people felt the deep responsibility that slavery imposed on them and worked honestly and sincerely to manage this peculiar institution according to the dictates of conscience and for the good of the country and sincerely believed that it was their duty to up hold and maintain the institution. They proved their sincerity by the protracted strength, they made for its perpetuation because they believed that slavery was right and because in the war for its abolition they felt that their freedom was at stake. They were conquered and slavery is gone to-day but few would recall it and have the issues it involved renewed. Many now recognized the hand of providence in its destraction and the day may come when we can see the benefits resulting from its abolution. Now we see the South for a period of twenty years has labored assiduously to clear away the wreck of the Civil war and find the negro in worse condition than slavery and the waite man laboring under untold difficulties in the managfment of a large ignorant and thriftless population that rests and immovable inculous on the Southern people. Society has been disorganized and elements of a new character coming led with the old native Southern element and this may so intermingle in the course of time that the distinctive Type of Southern character may be lost but it is not probable that this Country will ever know a race of men who will be their equals and the present generation will pass before the injustice intolerence and corruption of the horde to which our Country has given as a prey by our unscrupulous conquors will be forgiven or forgotten. Tennessee and North Carolina furnished a considerable proportion of our early settlers. The Tennesseans generally were originally from Virginia or North Carolina and were as a rule men of moderate means who did not belong to the old Virginia class. They were many of them of the pioneer type who commencing with the Revolutionary War had moved in adv ance of the tide of civilizationand had driven the Indians from the North Carolina and Georgia settlements had in many bloody conflicts taken middle Tennessee from them and when there were no more Indians to offer them the gage of battle

gradually move southward first to Winchester, Tennessee and then into Alabama which they were among the first to occupy. Here they found a land of [illegible] plenty and many of them here selected permanent homes and spent their remaining days under their own vine and fig trees. These men were of the finest type of the pioneer race. They were industrious and honest and patriotic simple in their habits of the purest republican type in politics and heroic natures. These men differed in some respects from the old Virginia Slave holders yet they inherited from a common ancestry many of their virtues andd not many of their vices and faults. Many of them rose rapidly in wealth and position and made up in shrewd native common sense for the lack of early educational facilities. Since the days of the Revolution the feud of the Whigs and Tories in North Carolina had created a prejudice among the Virginians against the people of the former State and the elder of the present generation can recollect the time when hailing from North Carolina was somewhat of an impediment to the favor of the masses. Our fathers tell us that one reason of this was that part of the emigration from the state was from the frontier Counties of the State and many of them were [illegible] and ignorant. Another reason was that a few North Carolina tories found their way hither and when found out they sought a more congenial Country. For follows the brand of Cain was upon them. Wherever they found Old Virginia or South Carolina and their only place of refuge was among the Creole Race of South Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana who know nothing of Whig or Tory. While this prejudice existed to a considerable extent yet a large element of the permanent settlers from this State rose above it and many of our distinguished men were natives of the old North State. For the greater portion of our lives we were accustomed to hear the old North States slightingly spoken of and even when our Civil War was inaugurated it was indulged in to some extent and the boys were disposed to dovide the Tar Heels. But the sequel proved how little the people of neighboring states know of each other. At the commencement of the war North Carolina had the best drilled, in fact the only drilled troop in the service and from the first battle of Manassas to the close of the war they held

their own among the best and bravest of our unequalled infantry of the army of Virginia. We now know that in patriotism, intelligence, culture and soldierly qualities they are the peers of the best and though they vindicated their character by heroic deeds on the battle field , yet that vindication has proved sufficient and nothing but ignorance or prejudice will at the present day cast a reproach at the people of the proud old state. There was also a considerable foreign element in our first settlement among whom were many men who became prominent, they were generally of Scotch and Irish decent with a few old English. These men were among the best of our citizens and contributed in a remarkable degree to the development and prosperity of our Country. Prominent among these were Mr. Patton and J. J. Donegan, McCartney, Mr. B. Talier, Samuel Bottors, Rev. John Allen, the Allisons, Neal B. Rose, James O. Crump whose names are well and favorably known to our people. A large proportion of the first settlers in New Madison were from the State of Tennessee and gave that portion an enviable reputation as a peaceable orderly and industrious community. These different nationalities have lost their destinctive character and their descendants are citizens to the manor born. The changes wrought by the Civil War had add - but little to the foreign element and except the marked increase of the Jewish element our white population is mainly composed of descendants of the original settlers and our population is composed of the best material equal in culture and refinement to any in the South. The old slave holding element that once composed a large destinctive element in our midst was swept out of existence by the war and there is no aristocracy save that of real worth. As a general rule the war left our people poor and those who have since become prominent in different avocation and professions have attained success by their own exertions and many of them are desendants of the working farmers and mechanics of the old regime.

CLEARING THE LANDS

When our forefathers came to this County it was covered everywhere with a magnificient forest. The trees were generally of the largest of their species, the poplar or lime tree were exceptionally numerous and large and were found in perfection on the best soil. To remove the primitive forests or deaden the was a task of no little magnitude. To cut down and remove the trees from the land was impossible and they were girdled, that is a circle cutting through the sap was girdled round their trunks. The best time to effectually perform this task

was in August and September as when girdled at this period their vitality was effectually destroyed, the leaves fell off and were not renewed and if fenced before spring the crops were planted. But the first year it was not expected that they would produce a good crop as the trees stood so thick that they took a great deal of the tillable land and their roots made thorough culture impossible. Besides when spring opened the undergrowth shot up in the rich soil and the sprouts were removed with the old fashioned grubbing hoe or mattock that differed from it in having a blade for chopping on upper end of the implement. Plowing among the roots was a very unpleasant and slow business and the word grub was a synonym for the hardest of all kinds of manual labor. As a general rule for the first two or three years the farms had to be grubbed over acre by acre by which time the sprouts and the roots near the surface were gotten rid of and the plowing was less difficult. But about the second the second year the small branches of the girdled trees began to fall, covering during the winter the surface with their debris which had to be gathered and burnt in the spring before plowing commenced. Then the less durable timber began to decay and prostrated by the winter gales and had to be cut off, piled and burned before plowing could be done. At first this task was not so great as the smaller trees and limbs from larger ones could be easily handled but when in course of time the big hickory and oak and poplar soon began to tumble, the matter grew serious and involved a month or six weeks arderous labor. On large plantations where there was an adequate force of stout men and stouter oxen the work was done by the hand s on the plantation, but in a region of small farms a cooperative system was introduced and what was termed log rolling was the order of the day. In the first place the owner of the field cut notches on the large logs at intervals of about ten feet and started a fire on each notch and when the fire had well caught he laid a large dry limb across the notch which caught and burned until it fell in half on each side of the log. Morning and evening the logs were mended up, the burned and divided fragments were piled up and placed in the increasing gap made by the fire and as the fire gnawed deeper, filling it up with

combustible material until it cut the log into, which was sometimes done as smoothly as if cut with a saw. Generally the hickory once fairly ignited, burned up root and branch but the oak and poplar burned into cuts someti mes ten or a dozen to a tree. Generally in favorable weather it took about a week to burn off the logs and just before log rolling day the farmer went over the ground with his axe and cut off logs the fire had missed. As a rule each farmer had one or two logrollings in spring but he expected the help of all his neighbors and had to help them so he calculated to spend three or four weeks in the business. There was generally an understanding on what day each man was to have his logrolling to prevent confusion in the work and there was frequently a working force of forty or fifty stalwart men on the ground. They would go to the large trees and turn the second cut from the root at right angles and cut two or three others and roll them alongside as a base to the log heap and prying up the others, they would insert their long strong dog-wood hand spikes until they rested on as many as the length allowed and then with a man at each end of every stick the word would be given, the log would rise and they would walk to the logheap with it. The man next the log heap would place the ends of the stick upon it go over to the other side and the united strength of the whole party would elevate the handsticks and slide the log to itsp place. Thus the work would go on in a marvelously short space of time, the heap would be completed by piling on the heavier part of the tree top. The portions the owner could handle were not touched as the object was to pile up the logs he could not lift and they generally had no time to lose, except an hour at noon they generally worked until sundown or till the logs were all rolled and the host expected them to remain until after supper even when there was no frolic or dance to detain them. Good whiskey was cheapcheap and abundant and there was an awful supply generally on hand and while nearly everybody partook of it, drunkenness was very rare on such occasions. The men went there to work and while intoxication was no disgrace,

yet it was considered unneighborly and dishonorable to shirk from any cause ~~of any~~ your part of the work for which you were already or expected to be paid in kind. The loads these men carried on their hand spikes were astonishing, sometimes the logs would be so large that a man could not see across it and to a bystander on either side it looked as if the huge log was crawling off with a single row of men walking on one side. Like all other feats of strength there was a peculiar sleight in grasping the stick in carrying the body and in walking with the huge load and the phrase to "Tote Fair" originated in the necessity of an equal division of the handspike under the log as between men of nearly equal strength two or three inches in the divide of the handspike mde a great difference in weight, each had to carry and where a strong man matched with a weaker one the strong mans end of the stick was shortened in due proportion. In a space or two or three weeks the logs in the fields for miles around would be piled in vast heaps and set on fire and at night the whole neighborhood would be illuminated. In those days spring came early generally people were planting by the middle of March and by the first of April the weather was warm and pleasant. Then there was another danger to meet, the sap part of the decayed trees got dry and burned like timber. Some times the wind would rise and sparks from the log heaps would catch and set the dead forest on fire and the farmers would have to fight for their fence amid the fire and smoke and blazing branches from the falling trees, sometimes thirty or forty acres would be on fire and the whole neighborhood would come to the rescue. A blazing branch or a burning trunk would fall on the fence, the men would hasten to the point of danger and scatter the fence rails to the right and left out of reach of the flames, then would come the cry "The fence is on fire" from some watchful sentinel then a rush to the place and tearing down the fence and removing the rails and so it would be kept up until the fire died out for want of fuel. The heavy forests on the mountains and near the fields would drop a heavy covering of leaves in the fall and winter and they becoming dry in the spring accidently would be set on fire. The fire would probably start on the mountains, night after night the line of fire would appear longer and wider, the wind would rise and it would get among the canebrakes and the popping of the cane would sound like the skirmish line of opposing armies. The farmers would be up in arms against it. They would clear long lines round their fences and set them on fire in long continuous lines on the side next to the forest, soon the slower line of flame would be met by the faster, the flame would shoot up for a moment and then die out along the whole line and the farmers with a sigh of relief would go to their homes to snatch a few hours of repose to

fit them for the arduous labors of the approaching day. Outside if the labor of preparing, piling and burning the logs there was a vast amount of building and fencing to be done and the men of that day were among the best axemen in the world. Whenever buildings were erected it was necessary to cut down and remove a considerable portion of the forest. The houses were generally made of logs and covered with boards and in the earlier settlements the boards were held down by weight poles and the doors hung on wooden hinges, and the old fashioned drawbars were used instead of gates. It generally was seven or eight years before the land was cleared generally of timber. The oak and Poplar trees generally lingered longest and were sometimes destroyed by fire as they stood. While the felling and removal of the forest envolved a vast amount of labor and no little injury annually to the growing crops, yet it is maintained that the mass of rubbish falling from the trees contributed materially to keeping up the land. The value of the timber destroyed by fire in clearing our land is immense and if on the land to day would be quadruple in value of the lands at the highest figure, they ever reached and it is unfortunate for the Country that the poorer shoals had not been left in timber as the value of the lands could be greatly enhanced thereby. Timber at that time was of little or no value and as far as could be foreseen the supply seemed inexhaustible. Our County has reached its crowning point of agricultural prosperity about the year 1850 when pretty well all the available lands on the old farms had been cleared up and put into cultivation and at that period very little cleared land was lying idle. But in the nearer portions of the County especially on Flint and Paint Rock the river lands once considered of very little value have been cleared since the war and is the main reliance of those parts of the County for corn and grain. While the disappearance of the timber from the fields has rendered them more liable to the washing of the heavy rains and they have greatly depreciated in producing power the County is undoubtedly healthier. There is less deposit of vegetable matter in the sloughs for creation of miasma and many noxious lands and bayous have filled up and are in cultivation. There is less obstruction to the creeks and rivers and the drainage of the Country is materially improved. But with the diminution of the forest area the seasons have become more uncertain, the rainfall decreased and droughts more frequent. Many fine springs which forty or fifty years ago furnished water the year round have either totally disappeared or run for part of the season only. Nearly all of our lands that are worth cultivating have been cleared and a considerable area of the older lands turned out as worthless. While as a rule we have sufficiency of timber for fuel yet good timber for fencing and bailing is growing scarce. The worn out lands in the Country ought to be planted in good timber plants and taken care of until the saplings could take care of themselves. A Country shorn of its timber islikely to become a desert and there is no greater benefit we could confer on coming generations than the inauguration of timber culture. The timber on land is its most valuable production, and its destruction ought to be stopped, and its area extended. The western prairies when thirty years ago a stick of timber could not be seen for miles now have extended areas of young forests planted by the present generation that will soon be sufficient for ordinary purposes. And it is our task not to remedy the evils of a timber famine when it is upon us but to prevent it by taking measures to preserve the present supply as well as to utilize our worn out fields by making them the source of future supplies.

Cultivation of Soil and History of Farming

The first grade of lands in this Country have proved to be of the very grade equal to any on the Continent. The persistent cultivation of these lands for a period of sixty years or more in cotton without fertilizing or rotation of crops and their producing qualities now are two classes of these first grade lands. The river botton lands subject to overflow and the higher lands the water never covers. The former class is generally planted in corn from the fact that the old shell deposits on these lands make them too strong in lime for cotton and because where water gets over the land it would not destroy the corn only by washing it away, yet it would utterly ruin a cotton crop and the planter can take no extra risks on his cotton crop. These river bank lands retains a great proportion of this original productions and unless in very dry seasons aside from preparing and planting from six to eight weeks is sufficient for cultivation and the yield is generally from forty to fifty bushels of corn to the acre. The tennessee River lands will probably retain their fertility for an indefinite period as the river deposits in time of high tide keep up the fertility of the lands. There is also an extendive area of of lands on the smaller streams that remain productive from the same course and the area of these lands is steadily increasing. When bottom lands are first cleared out from the river banks they are cut up by ponds and sloughs that make a considerable area of waste lands, but after these lands are cleared these wet places gradually fill up and the land becomes level. These spots once unfit for cultivation are filled with alluvial soil and soon become fit for cultivation and of remarkable fertility and this County will always be able to hold its high rank as a grain producing Country. When the County was first cleared up there was a large proportion of white green briar swamps lands near the foot of the mountain ridges that our ancestors considered worthless and was not cleared until recently. But we find from the ridges has been deposited on these lands and that they have become very fertile and have proved a valuable addition to our agricultural resources. Many farmers whose broken lands have been washed away and made comparatively sterile find full compensation in their once bottom or swamp lands and make as much or more on their farms than when they were first cleared. But the soil on these lands has come from the higher lands which have thus lost what the level lands have gained and consequently we find that the great deliveration has been in what were once the cotton area of the County. This the second class of our first

grade lands has lost considerably in productive power and their cultivation has not for a long time been profitable. W here the lands are broken especially near the mountains the want of protection by hill side ditching and injudicious cultivation they have been badly cut up by ditches and gullies formed by the mountain torrents and have lost a large proportion of tillable area from the above cause and also from the increasing sterility of the surface from the washing off of the alluvial soil. These lands known as the red and brown clay lands produce fine crops of clover and green crops and are easily restored and with a sufficient population to make their restoration and development a necessity could be easily restored to their original fertility and our farmers who have changed their system by cultivating clover and wheat and a regular rotation of crops are amply repaid in an annual increase of their wheat and oat and clover crops. Where we find gravel beneath the alluvial soil instead of the pure clay of which fortunately there is but a small proportion the task of reclamation is nearly hopeless and they will either be idle or the crops will be kept up by the use of artifical fertilizers. Unfortunately a considerable part of these sterile lands have been cleared and badly cultivated the little alluvial soil washed away and yellow gravel beds remain the fields have been turned out and are now covered with a stunted growth of bushes and briars and they should remain uncultivated except to try to renew the growth of timber upon them. The clay lands require intelligent culture restoration of the elements of production and a rotation of crops. The cheapest and best method of restoration is sowing green crops and plowing these under. About the year 1850 the agricultural production of Madison County reached their maximum, nearly all of the best available upland for cotton had been put into cultivation and the bottom lands were new and fresh and their yield enormous. Our best farmers while they raised large crops of cotton also raised corn and wheat in quantities and were also raising considerable crops of wheat, oats, beans, and peas.. The decline in the price of cotton made it the interest of the farmer to raise cotton crops on his best land and support his plantation on the rest

of his farm. About this time planters whose negroes were multipling rapidly began to look westward to Mississippi basin for a new field of labor and to gradually pave the way for a new system of labor and farming. They had the sagacity to forsee that North Alabama except on Tennessee River could not compete in cotton with Louisiana and Mississippi and Arkansas and began to make investments in the cotton producing area south and west and to turn their attention to clover and small grain to the drainage and improvement of the home farms, and the reform in farming has fairly inaugurated at the beginning of the Civil War. Any man who recall the condition of the farm of Dr. Thomas Fearn and Benjamin S. Pope and many others they can easily recall, can form a fair conception of the change in our system of farming that but for the war would have soon made Madison County the finest agricultural County in the State. There has been a great deal of invidious criticism on Southern farming since the war and many strangers among us have thought that their mission was to educate the southern farmer. They made no allowance for the ruinous effects of four years of war that left the people bankrupt, their fences and barns and houses destroyed, their farms grown up in sedge and bushes and washed to pieces by the floods. They made no allowance for the destruction of labor system and the utter and complete demoralization of our agricultural interests. When the war closed it was a question of subsistence and not of money making. One or two bad crops after the War found starvation staring us in the face and the Government was compelled to come to our aid in the prevention of suffering among the masses. Our most enterprising farmers who had used their credit in purchasing lands and Negroes had their property swept away and were overwhelmed by debt. Their cotton on hand at the beginning of the war had been destroyed or confiscated and those who had been able to realize large sums from sale of cotton they had managed to save from the wreck had to use their money for the support of their former slaves. When they made crops during the war they were taken by invading armies for subsistance and thousands of them whose sons were in the Southern Armies after paying high prices for provisions and raising enough corn and meat for the hands on their plantations saw themselves stripped of every pound of meat and every ear of corn by trains of army wagons for which many of them never received a

dollar in compensation. This was the farmers experience in North Alabama for four long years and it is not strange that they were utterly broken up and their energies paralized. After the war came bankruptsy and ruin. They were responsible for liabilities that the war had made it impossible for them to meet. Their negroes had been emancipated and were among them a thriftless race unfitted to manage their business or support their families and depending on their former owners for advice and assistance. The soldiers who survived the war and returned to their ruined homes were without money, clothing or farming implements. Those who had farms found them in ruin and their families destitute. But the new element that peace returned to us were a different race of men to what they were at the beginning of the war. They went out a brave generious high spirited race but many of them had never known adversity as they had been raised in opulence but tge war had trained them to labor. They knew how to meet and overcome difficulties by persevering to the end and were peculiarly fitted for arduous task of restoring prosperity to the Country. But while in a few years they reclaimed their lands and managed to support their families yet it was impossible for them to improve the lands and carry on their farms as they knew how to manage them if they had been able to make the money to invest in them. But they had to go in debt to support their families for the first year as they had been discharged to late in the season to commence a crop and when they commenced farming they were compelled to make cotton to pay their debts and when cotton went down they had a price for provisions that made it impossible to realize any profit on their crops and for years it was a struggle for existence and the payment of their debts under a normal state of affairs, their energy and persistence would have commanded success but they were so unfortunate circumstanced that great success was impossible and no people have done better all things considered. While they were schooled to hardships, toil and adversity they had a great deal to learn about economy and many of them paid very dear for their experience. While northern armies who were enriched by the war make invidious comparisons and look with contempt on our farming system, yet there is no doubt that those to the manor born are greatly their superiors in their knowledge of southern farming and while the northern emigrant may teach us valuable lessons upon the subject of deversity of products and in true economy yet to the intelligence and experience of our own people we must look for the dissemination of useful information among our planting community. We receive a vast amount of gratuitous and useless information from men that know nothing about our labor or lands but the practical experience and observation of our enlightened

planters who are fond of agricultural pursuits and are devoting their lives to the farming interest of the Country is our only true reliance for future progress and prosperity. The work they have undertaken is a long and ardious one but few of them may live to see the gangible result of their labors but if we have not the native element of progress in our midst we need not expect it by importation because our farming population are the fears of any of them in native sense and far superior to them in experience. Our old farmers forsaw the evils of their system of farming, they knew the wear and tear to which their lands were undergoing and the necessity of new cotton areas for their slaves and were rapidly adopting themselves to circumstances. When interrupted by the war they were earnestly engaged in the following projects. The sending of their slaves westward to the true cotton lands,, the preservation of their farms by judicious hill side ditching and scientific drainage wherever practicable,a change from cotton to small grain clover and peas, the improvement in grain, clover and peas. The improvement in their stock and an extensive system of stock farms to which their farms were so well adapted. A road system giving the farming community good turnpike roads to the river and railroad. These were some of the projects of the wise and enlightened farmers of Ante Bellum days and but for circumstances envolving unforseen and unprecedented calamities they would doubtless have executed their designs and realized their dreams of future prosperity to our people. The present generation have the same judgement and foresight, they keenly appreciate our needs and short comings but they lack one great element which our fathers possessed, the financial ability to carry out the plans the execution of which would give new impetuous to our agricultural community and afford to them proper remuneration for their labor. Our facilities for labor are deficient and while our lands are of quality to handsomely support double our present population are capable of great improvement in productive power, we must recollect that while it is easy to destroy, yet the work of restoration is a slow and tedious one involving years or even generations. Adversity has made our farmers students in their professions and they are devoting their time and talent to the question of permanent improvement. Their experience and observation will bear their full fruit in coming years and while they may consider they are reaping no substantial compensation for their yet future generations will give them honor for their inauguration of an era of farming prosperity. Our productions now are extensive and valuable as the census reports prove and our hope of future development lies in the improvement of our lands and the increase of our crops and farming population.

House Building

The early settler when he had selected and entered his homestead had his tract of 80 or 160 acres of heavy forest with not a tree missing. If he was a new comer in the country with no shelter for his family except his rude tent or covered wagon one or two beds and a few cooking utensils, his wife and children and a moriety of the vast wilderness was his earthly professions. He generally had his gun and dogs an axe or two, some iron wedges and owned or could borrow a cross cut saw. Fortunately for him there were others simularly situated and their first work was to fell a huge oak, saw and split it and rive into boards. The southern term for boards did not include sawn lumber but most boards riven out of oak about half an inch thick from three to four feet long and from six to eight inches wide. The first work was to cut forkes of sufficient length and fix them at a proper distance upright, lay poles thereon and cover with boards. This afforded protection from the rains and they and their families frequently spent weeks with no shelter,if the weather required it they placed uprights round the scaffold and placed thick boards around the sides edgewise and kept to their place by a longer outer strip pegged to the uprights. After a cabin was built these rude shelters were sometimes used as kitchens until the owners could find time to build more comfortable tenements for such purposes. The pioneers and his family were accustomed to the hardships of frontier life. Frequently they had journeyed two or three hundred miles in their wagon over new roads and through unbridged water course camping out at night in the open air and often exposed to inclement weather. Sometimes the rain would fall and raise the water causing them to have to halt on the banks of creek and wait two or three days for the stream to become fordable. They were accustomed to such mishaps and were a patient persevering race. Finally when their destination reached the rude shelter erected a hearth stone laid and their home fires kindled they felt the relief of him who after a long and tedious sea voyage is at last safely landed at his destination port. Such was the experience of the original emigrants to our County and in after years when they had attained comfort and prosperity, many of them looked back with regret to these days of privation and toil as the happiest days of their existence. The tools usually found in a well equipped pioneers camp were axes, a few augers, a foot ade, a drawing knife,

saws and sometimes a chisel or two. Broad axes and cross cut saws were scarce at first and came more into vogue when they aspired to hewed log houses. The first question in building a house was the help a man could reckon upon in his work if alone with no help but his wife, his logs were mere poles cut near or on the building site and were of size that he could handle. Where there were a few settlers in the neighborhood he would cut them larger and on the appointed day his neighbors would come over the lodge notched with nice judgement and generally the few put up the boards, laid on the roof and the weight poles placed on the top one to each course of boards and kept separate by pieces of timber found of prpper length among the least pieces from his board tree. If he had his puncheons scalped and ready, the floor was laid if not he made a temporary one out of boards. The doors and sometimes a window was cut out after the pen was up, but if no cross cut saw was forthcoming he had short logs cut properly which were put in and propped to their places as the building went up facings were scalped smooth and pegged to the logs on each side of the door. A shutter was made of boards and swung on wooden hinges and they moved in. The chimney place was provided in the same way as the door. If the new citizen, when no taste for home improved he would build up his chimney to the top of the chimney hole and dispense with a door shutter until a more convenient season which sometimes never came. When I was a small boy my father having been broken up merchandizing in Talladega went to the south part part of the county to an entry he had made and well do I recollect our arrival at our new home. We got there in a little carryall as it was called after dark in the early spring. The cabin was on a rocky hill and myself and next oldest brother, I was nine and he nearly eight took a jug and groped our way to the foot of the hill for water and when we got back while our mother was getting supper in the open air. After supper we brought boards from a pile fifty or sixty yards away and made a floor in the cabin, our beds were spread down and we were lulled to sleep by the mournful whipporwill and the persovering and exasperating screech owl. Our garden was grubbed out and fenced and cultivated with a hoe. In summer water became so scarce we boys had to bring it in jugs and buckets nearly half a mile. My father then dug a well sixty feet deep and when we could do no better my mother, myself and brother drew out the dirt with a windlass. About the middle of the autumn my fathers shoulder was out out of place, my skull fractured by a fall from a horse and my grandfather sent a wagon and brough us back to Madison, which was then considered the old Country. Luckily we had friends and relatives to pull us through. The backwoodsmen who came here had burned their ships behind them and came here to stay. Generally the door shutter was made and swung, the

stick chimney run up above the house top the logs of the cabin scalped to a line inside and out boards were smoothed and nailed inside for ceiling a loft was laid over head for storage of odds and ends and when nails were not forthcoming the cracks were closely chinked and then daubed on the outside with clay and by help of a roaring fire in the broad fire place in winter the cabin was made quite comfortable. This was before the Stone Age when capacious and comfortable houses with upper stories and stone chimneys came on. These houses were made out of the fine yellow poplar once so abundant all over the Country and the man whose circumstances enabled him to build such houses had a house that would last for half a century. They were generally well covered with good poplar or chestnut shingles and a roof would last for thirty or forty years. Sawing plank was a laborous business, yet in course of time the men managed to turn out a considerable amount of fine lumber from their old saw pits. The old fashioned whip saw is now more of a relic than an ordinary working tool but the first settlers remote from saw mills an with four roads universally resort to hand sawing to get flooring and planking for other uses. A pit five or six feet was dug in order to make it easier to roll up the logs. The saw stocks as they were termed put on a frame and a man on top and one in the pit with a measured regular stroke sawed through the long summer days getting out two or three hundred feet of lumber daily. Some men followed the business as a trade and could make from one and a half or two dollard a day at the business. A large amount of the lumber used in building up the city of Huntsville was sawn in this way and many an old settler who lived to own land and negroes got their start in life by pulling the whip saw. As the houses grew more pretentious and the logs heavier raising assembles grow in size and the knack of carrying up a corner one of the fine arts. It required the judgement necessary to alter the notches for a good pit and at the same time keep the walls plumb so that when the wall was up there would be uniformity in the cracks between the walls as to size. A wall straight and regular and the corners neatly trimmed. The men had

to be accomplished in the use of the axe and a good judge of form of symetry. Some of these old poplar log houses are still standing, but generally they have been weatherboarded and disguised and disfigured by side rooms and galleries and are hardly recognizable. Some of the finest specimens of these old time buildings are between Gurleysville and Graysons Spring where some four or five such buildings were erected about fifty years ago and are still standing. The art of chimney building also attained considerable perfection the body of logs and the stem of square sticks riven out of heart oak and the whole well covered with a coat of good clay made a very good chimney and many of them were well proportioned and symmetrical in appearance. They would not last a great whil unless protected from the rain which washed away the outer clay covering and destroyed their drought by admitting the air on all sides. The standard chimney to the hewed log house was the rock chimney which was well constructed and last for generations. But the first settlers had no hewed log houses or stone chimneys, these were the work of a later generation. The first houses were the log cabins with scalped logs and tall wooden chimney stacks.

---- Pioneer Life Seventy Years Ago------

Living as we do in an age replete with the comforts and conveniences of modern civilization it is difficult to form an adequate conception of the inconveniences hardships and privations undergone by our fathers who colonized Madison County. We have facilities of transportation through our railroads and express company that enable us to command any of the necessaries or luxuries of life with but little labor or trouble on our part. Wohen we consider how great a part of the time our Fathers was demanded in obtaining many of the absolute necessities of life, we wonder how it was that they had time to accompolish the large amount of work they accompolished. But in these days a little money went a long way and the enchanted price of living to day demands as great a part of our working hours as our ancestors lost in providing necessaries and comforts for which we spend more money than they but thigh demands but little of our spare time. Time is more valuable now than then from the fact that it represents, lest the elements of living that is it takes two or three time the amount of actual labor for the support of a working mans family and with the same demand on us of extra time for procuring the absolute necessaries of life we could not be able to make a living. While modern progress has extended the area of our real or imaginary essentials for subsistence and comfort it has also placed them in easy reach and given us the extra time necessary to labor for their attainment. It is questionable whether this has been a desirable change for the laboring especially the industrious man. He becomes wedded to his work and allows his mind to contract to too narrow a sphere. He does not sufficiently choose his faculties of observation and while he may read more books and have more general information than his ancestors had, yet it is probable that he is

less acquainted with nature and her laws has less self reliance and independence of thought and less native common sense. Those with leisure for culture and observation have a great advantage over the man who is compelled to devote his time to manual labor especially where the laboring man becomes completely merged in his peculiar occupation and the result is that the dividing line between mental and physical labor is becoming more pronounced, and we have society more clearly divided on the point of culture and talent than on rich and poor. Wealth may be suddenly attained, yet the fortunate man is not so much different from his former co-worker. Culture and refinement is the product of long years of civilization and the real aristocracy of the land is its foremost writers and thinkers. But I set out to picture the life of our earlier settlers with regard to the ordinary necessaries of life. If asked what were the first necessities of life, most of us would say bread and salt and it is natural to suppose the procuring of these articles was the first case of our ancestors, yet they were sometimes compelled to live for a time without either. Unless the emigrants happened to settle near an Indian Village which was not done in this County because they had no permanent settlements here. The procuring of these articles frequently involved a journey of fifty orahundred miles and the transportation of these articles on pack horse When my Grandfather settled at Estills Factory near Winchester in the beginning of the present century he bought his bread and salt from near Nashville the first year and although the early settlers had to go up to the neighborhood of Winchester for their first supplies, yet that involved a journey of from forty to fifty miles which took a large amount of time and labor and if their bread gave out they substituted jerked venison. They made it an object the first year to raise corn enough for bread and as there were no mills each regulated family made a hominy mortar by burning and cutting a large bowl in the end of a large stick of tough timber and using a large wooden pestle usually run by a sweep and many of them who were far from the mills used bread made in this way for many years. After they had made a corn crop there were different substitutes for bread, lye hominy was one of the best and most common because every body

could procure clean wood ashes for the purpose and there are but few better preparations of Indian Corn than a good article of lye hominy. .Flour or wheaten bread was but seldom seen and was brought from Tennees and Virginia. At first very little of it was ever seen but as the Country increased in population the most of the flour was brought down the Tennessee to Dittos Landing where there was a flour inspector appointed to see that the flour was properly graded and branded. About meat there never was any great trouble for game especially deer was abundant but to keep a supply of salt was a matter of serious difficulty. Salt first came from East Tennessee and Virginia and was sometimes hauled all the way from the Virginia Salt Works to Huntsville and before Huntsville was a town the settlers went to Nashville after it and brought it down on pack horses. When the population had increased the demand it was brought down in flatboats or broad horns as they were called and became comparatively abundant. When it had to be brought in sacks on packhorses,a two bushel sack was a large supply for a large family. The salt manufactures at the head waters of the Tennessee were soon abundantly able to supply the Country and it was hauled from the river in wagons over the rough roads to all parts of the County and sometimes the keel boats that carried cotton down Paint Rock and Flint brought back a load of salt but it was very hard work to pull a boat up the current with even a light cargo. Iron was scarce and high and many of the first houses built did not have a nail in them. They made their own furniture out of rough hewn timbers. Many had dirt floors in their houses and some used broad fencing split out of poplar and cut and trimmed to a level. They dug their bread trays and turned their table ware out of buck eye or some other soft wood and had plates and dishes of pewter. Their cupboards were rude shelves fastened to the walls of the house, with a slat pegged across on which their dishes rested. The housewives kept their pewter boards scoured as bright as silver and set them edgewise on their shelves and they made quite a show when properly cleaned and tastefully arranged. The tinkers whose calling is now obsolute, traveled from house to house and did the

repairing and received very little money, but a great deal in barter in the way of the necessities of life. At first many depended on game for a supply of meat which they shot or trapped and every well regulated family had one or two steel traps. In hunting the old fashioned flint lock rifle was in general use. They managed to keep a supply of lead but shot guns had not come into use and people had not learned to make shot. Powder was scarce and dear, but they were equal to the emergency. They knew how to make saltpeter out of the dirt in the numerous caves, they bought sulphur, burned charcoal of willow trees and manufactured their own powder. This though not always as reliable as the product of the present day, yet answered a good purpose. They generally could get within short range of their game and were very expert with their long rifles. To bring down a deer at full speed at the distance of eighty or a hundred yards was not considered a remarkable feat and those riflemen without discipline or military experience routed at New Orleans the finest European Army that ever invaded our shores. Buck skin was in general use and from it was made clothing, moccasins, hunting pouches and bed covering. It was used for sewing thread and twisted into ropes. Flax was introduced early and did well. Many of them had flax wheels and after a while began to make linen and here and there today we see counterpanes and table linen of excellent quality and fine finish and made seventy five or eighty years ago. Soon each family had its little cotton patch and as there were no gins to clear it of the seeds they would in the long winter evenings pile it round the hearth and pick out the seed with their fingers and in this tedious way would pick out the whole crop for the years spinning. The wheel cards rool and loom were indispensable and were frequently of home manufacture and the industrious house wife generally had the walls ornament with great festoons of white thread selected into hanks ready for the warping bars. The cloth they made was of excellent quality and their homemade garments were proof against buches and brambles. When cattle became abundant the ordinary tallow candle molded or dipped was used in lighting their house but they retired early in summer and had

open wood fires in winter and did not have much occasion for a light at night unless there was sickness in the family. In the fine woods they would make a wick twenty or thirty feet long dip it in rosin and beeswax roll it in round a corn cob like a coil of rope and pull out the end and light it and by keeping it pulled up above the coil. It would make a very good light and last for a long time. When bed time came if the family was numerous and the room small the big boys would go up a step ladder into the loft where they would pass the night. But boys were not particular where they roosted and frequently slept in the yard under the trees or went off hunting and growing tired would kindle a fire off in the woods and lie down and sleep until day light.

Calico was worth fifty cents a yard and common folks seldom wore it but they made beautiful home spun dresses and it is said that the girls looked just as handsome in it as they now do in their silks and satins.

Sports And Past Times

Although the life of the early settlers was full of hardships and privations, yet they were a cheerful and social people and managed to spend a considerable portion of time in the sports and social amusements of the age. These were many and varied and of a character to develop fully their physical nature. Any person familiar with the lineage of the higher classes would naturally infer that the turf would take precedence of the higher sports after the Country had made some advancement in civilization. Thus we find that horse racing was a favorite sport of all classes. At first in shape of quarder or scrub races and then at a later day when sporting men began to import thoroughbreds, regular race tracks were established and the sport afforded a wider scope. There was a race tract near thepresent residence of Dr. C. A. Robinson that was well patronized by the sporting men of the day. Samuel and George Egland, James Camp, Richard Pryor, Nat Terry the famous sporting character and John Campbell of Green Bottom Inn were all ardent patrons of the turf and trained some very fine horses. John Connally's race track four miles west from Huntsville was a great resort of sporting characters and there Conally raced and trained. Grey Eagle the champion of the south that is said to have been victorious in every encounter against the finest racers from New Orleans to Louisville. He was a thoroughbred stallion and the ancestor of remarkable stock of horses. Everywhere celebrated for their speed and endurance. Trotting horses had not then reached their present development and horse racing generally meant races of speed.

Card playing became to be a favorite game and gambling got to be such an evil that laws were soon adopted for its suppression and were rigorously enforced, yet many expert handlers of the boards claimed their nativity in this County. While the people were generally sober in their habits, yet temperance was not considered

a cardinal vista. Among the wealthy part of the community it was universal custom for the old fashioned side boards to be well garnished with a good assortment of decanters containing fine liquors. Pure corn whiskey was a universal beverage and our ancestors partook of it freely, yet while the majority of them drank it every day but few of them were drunkards and it was not so deleterous in its effect as the liquors of the present day. Many of them lived to a good old age but while they do not appear to have suffered in health or fortune, yet they did untold injury to their children who cultivated an appetite for intoxicational drinks that resulted in the deplorable spread of intemperance. In our land in after years Music and Dancing were favorite amusements.

Wealthy and cultivated Virginian settlers brought with them the virtues and vices of their ancestry and taken all in all a nobler race of men were never found among the Pioneers of any age or Country. Their manners and customs and pecularity were pretty much similar to those of their fathers and have been vividly portrayed in the writing of Pauldy Kennedy, Cooke Simms and others and with a change of locality would apply to Old Madison fifty years ago. But there was a large population in the County that differed widely from this old class of settlers in their manners, customs and mode of life. It is of the pioneers class who were here for years. Their past times and amusements that I wish to write and while the material for their biography is meagre, yet the subject is full of interest. Many of the first settlers were typical pioneers whose perseverance and courage have made the settlement of all new Countries possible. The Georgia Land Company first directed attention to the new region and many of the old frontiersmen gradually worked their way down through Tennessee to end their days in Madison. While it is true that they came here in considerable ~~nu~~ numbers, yet they are not so numerously represented here now as are families that came later from more cultured regions. The reason of this is that the children inherited the adventurous spirit of their fathers and moved westward with the tide of emigration until they were arrested by the blue waters of the Pacific and in many instances out of large families once living in the County scarcely a single representation remains in the land of their nativity. Between new and old Madison there was but little intercourse because they were separated by Mountains and deep streams of water that made intercourse more difficult than nowday. I propose to limit the early history of Madison County to the session

of the first legislature of the state held at Huntsville in the winter of 1819 and 1820. To this time Madison County was North Alabama and I have to the best of my ability traced the rise and progress of the settlement of the Tennessee Valley to that time. Should I become satisfied that out of the material at my disposal I may be able to prepare a history of the County from the year 1820 to the Civil War that will be of sufficient interest to our people to prepare and publish I will continue these sketches. I am not prepared at present to determine whether out of the abundance of material to select from whether I will be able to educe a history of the County satisfactory to myself or th the public. I have passed briefly over many things that would be interesting to our people and which if treated more fully would be valuable material in a complete history of the County and I hope some of our citizens qualified for the task will at no distant day lend their talents to the task of perpetuating our early history before its details are forgotten or have become more traditions. I have given to the best of my ability a meagre outline of our Counties history to the year 1820. I have thought it best in the article on Huntsville and the County Court to complete my history of these institutions, but some subjects have been overlooked and I propose in this article to make brief mention of them. I have said nothing on the subject of education and I would consider it a great interest to our people to leave the impression that they took no interest in the education of their children. A large number of our old citizens were men who felt a warm interest in the education of our people.

Green Academy was incorporated November 26th 1812. With William Edmondson John Brahan, William Leslie, James McCartney, Peter Perkins, Charles Burrus, William Derrick, James Neely, John Grayson, Henry Cox, Bennett Woods, Samuel Allen, Andrew K. Davis, William Evans and Nathan Power trustees. Many of these are familiar names to our people and they proceeded without delay to select a suitable site for the erection of suitable buildings. They advertised for proposals and powers spring now underwoods, Watkins Spring. The big Spring

near Meridianville, Brahans Spring and the lot on which the Public School building now stands were among the applicants for the location of the Academy The Trustees selected the old Green Academy now the public school lot and I think that their choice was wise and judicious and the erection of the school buildings pushed forward with the characteristic energy of the period. With the exception of Washington Academy at St. Stephens incorporated a year earlier this was the oldest institution of learning in the State and the most prominent until the establishing of the State University in 1821. The act of incorporation authorized the trustees to raise four thousand dollars by a lottery a favorite method of raising money at that time but I have no evidence to show that the trustees ever availed themselves of that provision of law. In the year 1816 the legislature donated five hundred dollars to the Academy. It is probably that the Academy owed its prosperity to the public spirit of our Citizens and it is a great misfortune that a list of the students of the Academy has not been preserved as it would be a roll of honor inscribed with the names of a majority of the prominent citizens of North Alabama were educated in the State from the year 1812. Some of the trustees having died removed or resigned the legislature in 1818 filled the vacancies by the a appointment of Lemuel Mead, Henry Chambers, Henry Minor, John M. Taylor, Clement C. Clay and John William Walker. The greatest number of the earlier settlers who came here at middle age had retired to private life, when the state was admitted into the union. LeRoy Pope the founder of Huntsville lived to an old age and died in Madison County respected and honored by our people. William Dickson went further West and after a long and prosperous career died near Buzzards Roost. Afterward Dickson station M & C RR. The Winstons went South and were wealthy and prominent planters and one of them was the ancestor of John Anthoney Winston, Governor of the State and a talented and popular politician. LeRoy Pope, The Bibbs James Manning, John

Drahan, Samuel Allen, Jacob Pruitt, John Wethers, Charles Cabaniss, Robert Thompson and some ot hers whose name I cannot call to mind came here with considerably property which most of them judiciously invested and largely increased. John Wethers was the father-in-law of C. C. Clay. I believe he went south and his family has been prominent in our state. James Manning was the ancestor of the Lowe family and few men enjoyed a higher reputation among our people than James Manning. James Clemons, Stephen Ewing, Mr. Patton Frank Mastin, Isaac Lanier, Robert Lanford, James McCartney, Thomas and William Brandon and many others came here between the years 1809 and 1819 and with no capital but industry and perseverance became wealthy and prominent citizens of the County.

I have already mentioned the names of many of the leading planters who were among the early settlers in the county and I would be glad, if limit of my sketches permitted to mention others among professional men. Dr. Thomas Fearn took the first rank among the physicians and surgeions, And scientists of the age. As a young surgeon he had considerable experience in the war of 1812 and he finished his cause of study in the medical schools and hospitals of London and Paris in the years 1818 and 1819. On his return he took a high rank among American Physicians and Surgeons and was a reliable and valuable contributor to many of our medical journals. He and C. C. Clay were intimate friends and close correspondents during his European tour and from what I have seen of this corresponding its publication would be valuable contribution to the history of that memorable period. Dr. Fearn died at an advanced age just at the beginning of the war, ~~of late,~~ andno man who ever lived in the county devoted more of his time to the developments and progress of our people. But the Huntsville bar from 1809 to 1820 would furnish in

its self the material for an interesting volume. I can give here a mere sketch of some of the lawyers admitted to practice here during the early days of the county under Territorial rule and the role of honor after that period is also full of distinguished lawyers who rose to prominence in Alabama and other southern States. At the first court held here John C. Hamilton, James Rogers, George Coulter, John W. Walker, Marmaduke Williams and Lewis Winston and Gabriel Moore admitted to the bar all of whom became prominent lawyers, and John W. Walker and Gabriel Moore and John W. Walker were U. S. Senators after the admission of the state. Gabriel Moore was also Governor and member of congress. John M. Taylor afterward Judge of the Circuit and Supreme Court was admitted to the bar in 1810. C C. Clay Circuit Court and Supreme Court Judge, member of Congress, Governor and U. S. State Senator was admitted to the bar in 1812. Of other distinguished men admitted to the bar at Huntsville during the period from 1812 to 1819 were Henry Minor, Judge of Circuit Court and Supreme Court reporter. John McKinley member of Congress U. S. Senator and Judge of Federal Court. Samuel Chapman Judge of Madison County Court for fourteen years and Circuit Judge of Tuscaloosa Circuit for twelve years. Mr. Kelley member of congress and U. S. Senator, Henry Chambers speaker of the house of representatives and U. S. Senator. Hugh McVay president of senate and Governor, William I Adair speaker of the house of representatives and Circuit Judge James W. McClay speaker of the house of representatives, Arthur F. Hopkins leader of the Whig Party, Circuit Judge and Justice of the Supreme Court. Henry W. Collier chief justice of the supreme court and Governor and E. A. Webster s Secretary of the State. This roll of honor of which the Huntsville bar may be proud and the names of many distinguished men who were admitted to the bar after the year 1820 might be added to the list James G. Birney the leader of the old abolition party and is first candidate for president, came to

Madison County before the year 1819, was a member of the circuit legislature and for many years a leading attorney in Huntsville. Of the old settlers who were members of the legislature who were not members of the bar were Frederic Weeden, Isaac Lanier, John Vining, John M. Leake, David Moore, James Penn and Thomas Miller. James W. Camp and Samuel Walker. Of this number Samuel Walker was a representative nearly every session from 1819 to 1840 and was twice speaker of the house and it is said that though lacking the education and culture of many of his colleagues yet he was the most accompolished orator of his day. He resigned the speakership of the house in 1840 on account of ill health and died soon afterward on his plantation in the northern part of the county and his grave in an old sedgefield covered bushes and briers was pointed out to me over twenty years ago and doubt if there is a man living to day who could identify it. Among the noted men of his day was Hunter Pool who came here about the year 1816. It is said that he had been a civil engineer in the British Army and he surveyed part of the Public Board in the year 1818. He was doubtless the best Civil Engineer and Surveyor of his time. He was an excellent draughtsman and in the year 1819 drew an excellent map of old Madison that was a model of neatness and accuracy. Unfortunately it was lost during the Civil War. He also drew a map of the City and constructed the water works of the City. He was County Surveyor from the year 1819 to 1830 which was but a short time before his death. With this brief sketch of the prominent men of the state who settled here before 1819, I close my early history of the County.

History of Madison County

Chapter I

By the Census of 1820 the population of Madison County was 17,817 of whom ten thousand were white and the remainder were colored. The census had been

taken by act of the legislature of Mississippi Territory in 1816 when there were ten thousand white and 4200 colored in the county. It is probable that in the year 1818-19 the population of the County was greater than in 1820 as there has been a great influx of population about the beginning of the land sales and the old County was literally crammed with people. But when the land sales opened the whole Tennessee valley to settlement. The people from Madison with their negroes swarmed over on to the new lands and had drawn heavily on the population of the county, in the year 1820 when the census was taken. The County as then constituted had just been extended and charged to its present western limit but on the east side the Jackson County line ran directly through Hickery Flat about one mile east of New Market then through Davis & Jno Fannings James Erwins and Cerons plantation thence it reached the mountains to Bones thence through Bones Jenkins and Derichs places across the Hurricane to the mountains thence down Hurricane to Clarks Mill thence South near Buford Bennett's to corner on Kelley Mountain thence on a straight line to Flint River at W. O. Carpenters, thence down Flint to it's mouth.

The County as then constituted contained about six hundred and fifty square miles and the fertile and now thickly populated regions known as Hickory Flat Mountain Work? Hurricane Valley, Sharps Cove, Killingsworth Cove, Ashburns Cove, Colliers Poplar Ridge, New Hope, Owen's Cross Roads, and Clouds Cove was in part of Jackson County and in an unbroken wilderness on the west side of Flint from Woods Mill to the Tennessee was not settled and no settlements were found along the Tennessee until we reached the vicinity that could really be considered as inhabited did not embrace but little over half the present area of the county which would be about the same number of people to the square mile as we now have. The northern portion of the county was much more thickly settled than now and there was a much larger propportion of small farms in that part of the county than at present. The County was about thirty miles long and an average of twenty miles wide and the only range of mountains in it was the

Monte Sano Range running nearly north and south from Huntsville to Tennessee river at the head of Hobbs Island. The county contained a large proportion of level fertil land a large amount of which was cleared and in cultivation and there was but little of the tillable lands at that time that did not produce profitable crops. The first state legislature after the adoption of the state constitution adjourned about the close of the year 1819. The year 1820 was a very important one throughout the state as the legislature had provided for a general election of officers in the year 1820 which came off on the first Monday in August of that year.

Chapter 2
Cotton Freighting

It is an old adage that a country is happy and prosperous about which nothing is written. This may account for the absence of any written history of events transpiring in our county from the year 1820 to 1830 and may also justify us in the conclusion that during that decade our people were peaceful and prosperous and that nothing disturbed the tranquillity that prevaded the old county in common with the whole county. In fact this ten years of our country's existence was remarkably free from political agitation as party strife and party lines had hardly divergence enough to identify different factions that a few years afterwards developed into two powerful organizations that sought to shape and control the destiny of the American people. In the year 1820 Madison County was an agricultural region in the full sense of the term. Our fresh and fertile lands yielded enormous crops of corn and cotton and it was the ambition of our citizens in every profession to own a farm. The number of owners of small farmers bore a greater ratio to the population than at any past or future period and these contributed in no small degree to the general prosperity of our people in the northern and north eastern portion of the county where population is now sparse and sedgefields unfenced and unfilled are frequently seen there were thick settlements of independent small farmers whose farms really covered an area of more than one hundred and sixty acres. Many of them owning no slaves and the slave

owners generally working in the fields with their negroes. Transportation of our cotton to market was the great drawback to the agricultural industry of the county, especially when the price of the staple began to decline while salt, flour, lumber, potatoes, fruit and some other articles was floated down the Tennessee from the fertile grain producing regions on Clerich and Holston rivers. Our dry goods had to come over land from New York and Philladelphia, and our most enterprising merchants frequently received consignments from these cities in wagons loaded there and never disturbed until unloaded in Huntsville. There was a brisk trade also with Nashville where a large amount of cotton was carried in wagons that came back laden with dry goods and groceries. Our people could do nothing with the large surplus of corn raised except to make it into pure log still whiskey and feed it to their hogs of which large droves every where swarmed the woods and about Christmas times to quote an often repeated saying "Every body was up to their elbows in grease." The deer hunters with their hounds would occasionally run into these formidable droves of swine and such collisions generally resulted in disabling many of their dogs and sometimes in the treeing of the hunters, one who has never seen a charge of one or two hundred excited and enraged porkers upon a pack of dogs can form no idea how natural it is for a man on foot to hunt a high log or convenient fork of a tree until the storm subsides. Nuts and acorns in these days were so plentiful that outside of the fields they fairly covered the earth and as hogs and cattle required but little help through the winter they increased rapidly and pork and beef was almost given away to all who asked for it. To the man who wanted to make money, cotton was everything because there was no other product that would pay for transportation to market and before they had in their wildest imaginations ever thought of railroads and steamboats above Muscle Shoals. Our forefathers were e rnestly trying to solve the problem of cheap transportation of their increasing and valuable cotton crop to a ready market. Thence originated the Indian Creek Navigation Company with the project of Canal navigation from Huntsville to Trianna and the Flint River Navigation Company whose object was to make Flint River navig ble from Scotts Mill now Brownsboro

to Tennessee river, naturally they looked to water transportation for their cotton and to New Orleans as the cotton port of the south and for many years flat boats floated the larger part of the cotton crop down the current to New Orleans. These boats would carry three or four hundred bales of cotton and once clear of the shoals generally floated peacefully and safely with current until they were cabled to the Levee at New Orleans. Before the era of steamboats it was common for the boat hands to tramp back home through the Choctaw and Chickasaw countries. The trouble in the transportation of cotton was in getting it through the shoals. Part of it was hauled to Whitesburg and Triana and loaded on Flat boats or broad ferries as the western people termed them and the boats cabeled to the shore to wait for a shoal tide. Boats were also built up the waters of Paint Rock and Flint and loaded and floated with the first favorable tide to the place of rendezvous. The magnificent poplars of Madison and Jackson furnishes excellent material for boat gun wales or on boatmen phrase " gunnels" many of them being from seventy to ninety feet to the first timber and when cut down and split open made excellent boat material. These gunwales trimmed down to the proper shape, placed on levers projecting over a high river bank, the boat framed and floored and calked, then slid out to the end of the levers and turned into the river, bailed out and loaded. A string oar and side oars fitted and boat and crew started on its long voyage at Whitesburg or Decatur a licensed shoals pilot was taken on board if there was a shoal tide in the river and in a short time they were shooting rapidly down the tumtiling shoals, now dodging a bar in the river and now rounding a point where one minute they would seem to be rushing to certain destruction against some frowning bluff and the next at a word from the steerman the oars would dip on this or that side and the boat would round by a hairs breadth the point of danger and rush madly towards the opposite side of the turbid cataract. Pilot and oarmen with every faculty intent and every muscle strained would finally breathe a sigh of relief as they cabled to the bank at the ancient city of Eastport where the shoal's pilot gave place to

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to the Mississippi river pilot who before untying his cable inspected his craft, repaired damages and frequently took a farewell spree as the river code prohibited drunkenness while in charge of a boat and its valuable cargo. When cotton was worth twenty cents a pilot received from one hundred and seventy five to two hundred dollars a trip . And as it sometimes involved a walk from New Orleans to Huntsville. The pilot certainly earned his money as he never was likely to make over two trips in one cotton season. Many citizens of our country were regularly engaged in the business of cotton freighting and built or bought many boats and employed many men in the freighting season. Of this class of men, Richard W. Anderson was best known to the people of our county. In his youth dating back some where about the year 1820 he was actively engaged in this business and accumulated money that made him by successful land speculation a wealthy man in his old age. He was a man of excellent sense, a good surveyor and a good judge of land and made judicious investments.
I have heard some marvelous stories of his pedestrian feats. It is said that he would frequently take a stroll down to Whitesburg and back before breakfast. And there was a story current that in the beginning of his freighting business he always walked from New Orleans to Huntsville and always came in three or four days in advance of the rest of his boats crew and that in one of his trips not being able to sell a boat cable for a satisfactory price at New Orleans he coiled it up and stalked home with it round his neck. After he retired from business he made his home in Huntsville and was much respected by the people and remarkable for his benevolence and eccentricity. He was ~~over~~ fond of children and was in later years seldom seen on the streets without a bevy of the little ones at his heels. He belonged to a reputable family from Maryland and erected what is known at the Huntsville ~~Sendian~~ Meridian Monument to the memory of his deceased brothers and sisters. William B. Taber one of the cotton factory pioneers of this county married his sister and dying in Nashville a few weeks ago was brought to Huntsville and buried by his wife who for

nearly forty years has slept under the shadow of the Meridian monument. Richard W. Anderson was about seventy years old at his death, Dr. Wm. Anderson the only survivor of his brother was a prominent physician of Madison County fifty years ago and died at Holly Springs, Mississippi about the year 1863 where he had resided for many years and was widely known and highly respected by the citizens of Mississippi.

Chapter 3

While there was but a slight difference among our people in national politics about the year 1822 or 1823 yet there was considerable state legislation. Most of the laws enacted at this period applied to the whole state and are of local interest to the people of our county only in relation to the illustration and explanation of transactions within the body of our own county. For instance without the knowledge that one man in those days sometimes held two or three offices and could be justice of the jurymen or clerk of court or County Commissioner, and at the same time serve as members of the Legislature there would seem to be an apparent contradiction in the statement that some Walker or Lemuel Mead or other that could be mentioned were members of the legislature at the same time they were said to be holding some other county office . In fact this usage held until the year 1840 when committees of investigations were appointed and nearly all members of the legislature holding other offices were declared ineligible and their seats vacated. It even vacated the seat of Green P Rice, president of the senate but out of defference to his position the decision in his case was postponed until the day before adjournment. Among the members who lost their seats on this account were Robert T. Scott of Jackson, circuit clerk Marmaduke Williams of Tuscaloosa County Judge Thomas S. Walker of Benton, Solicitor and Percy Walker of Mobile Bank Director all of whom were well-known to our people. In the election of 1841 Samuel Chapman, Gross Gorman, Samuel Walker, Charles Mat[illegible]

elected Justices of the jurymen, but they served but a short time before the offices were abolished and a county Judge and County Commissioners appointed instead. Samuel Chapman was first Judge of the County Court and the first court of county Commissioners was held on the first Monday in January 1833. At first the County Commissioners were elected annually then for two years and it doubtless be better for all parties concerned if their time was extended to the length of the Probate Judges term of office thereby avoiding a change of revenue officers during his term. The first County Commissioners elected under the act of June 1832 were Samuel Walker, Nathan Smith, James Mauldin and Ezekiel Craft of whom James Mauldin and Samuel Walker lived in the northern portion of the county. Nathan Smith in the Eastern and Ezekiel Craft in the Big Cove near the county line. While many of the duties of the county commissioners were the same as at present yet some work devolved on them that does not fall on the commissioners court at present. They had to regulate atariff of charges to be made by all tavern keepers and as a matter of curiosity I give the tarif's for the year 1833 which all tavern keepers had to hang up in a public place. Dinner 50 cents Breakfast 37½ cents, supper 37½ cents, Lodging 12½ cents, horse per night 50 cents, single feed 25 cents, 1 Qt. of wine one dollar and a half ½ pint of Jamaica rum 50 cents, ½ pint of French Brandy 50 cents, ½ pint of whiskey 12½ cents. All auctioneers at first had to be recommended to the Governor for appointment and were required to give bond in sum of two thousand dollars and be sworn into office but in 1833 they were appointed by the commissioners court and licensed on giving bond, and they were required to pay a tax of two per cent on the amount of their sales. All county officers not elected by the people were appointed by the commissioners court and under this law they appointed a county treasurer, an assessor and collector and coroner. In 1833 these offices were all filled. Littlebury Mauldin, brother of the commissioner was appointed assessor and collector. Ezekiel Craft one of the commissioners was appointed county treasurer [illegible] to have

continued in both offices. Daniel Rather was reappointed coronor and Hunter Peel county surveyor. Bennett Wood a Baptist Minister and original owner of the Bole Factory property on flint river had been County Treasurer since 1819 and was not a candidate for reappointment and made a settlement with the commissioners court which showed that the amount of county revenue in his hands was forty six dollars and fifteen cents which he paid into court and received a formal discharge. Not withstanding the restrictions and heavy taxations connected with an auctioneers business, it must have been a profitable business as Daniel B. Turner, George H. Malone, George W. Lee and James C. Carrikl were appointed auctioneers by the commissioners court in the year 1823. The rate of taxation on real estate at this time was ten cents on the hundred dollars on real estate and the commissioners made a county levy of one eighth of the state taxes. The laws were divided into four classes, valued at sixteen, ten, four, and two dollars respectfully. And town lots valued by the assessor and collector. The revenue laws of the time were open to many objectives especially in the incagiability of the late merchant's paid thirty cents on the hundred dollars. Money at interest twenty-five cents and banking establishments fifty cents. The amount of the county revenue was small but seemed to have been sufficient as work and material were cheap. Even in this period of plenty there were some ten or dozen paupers who were let out to the lowest bidden and the highest price paid for keeping a pauper was about seventy five dollars per annum and in some cases not more than forty or fifty dollars was paid for them. There was a poll tax of fifty cents on white male adults between the ages of twenty one and fifty and the tax on slaves made up for the light levy on real estate.

In the year 1822 the first bridge at the three forks of flint river was completed by Bennett Woods who contracted for and built it for one thousand dollars. There was one safe feature of the contract for bridges at that

period. The contract not only gave bond to keep it in good order for seven years and if the bridge gave way on account of faulty construction within seven years the contractor was bound to make it good. I have not ascertained the style of the first bridge across Flint but there is nothing to show that Bennett Woods seven year bond was ever forfeited. There were some changes in the Court of County Commissioners when they were elected annually or biannually, but Samuel Walker was for a long period commissioner though he went to the legislature nearly every session. Grass Scruggs became a commissioner a few years after his retirement from office of Justice of the Quoroum by abolition of the office and probably survived all of his colleagues of that period. He lived to a good old age on what is now known as the Gus Martin plantationand he was one of the best and purest men of his time. A man of spotless integrity a sincere piety he was held in the highest reverence by the communnity in which he lived and left andhonored name as a heritage to his descendants.

Chapter 4
Election Districts

While Alabama was a territory the people first voted at the County site for members of th legislature under the territorial laws , Justice of the Peace and Constables were elected at the muster ground of the Militia Companies and the captains of the companies with two free holders selected by him were inspectors of the elections and this law remained in force for many years after the state was admitted into the Union. Our election districts were of military origin and were designated asbeats of each captains company.[4] The first beat outside of Huntsville was Horton's Mill just above the bridge at the fork of Flint and for several years this was the only voting place in territorial elections outside of Huntsville. The war of 1812 and rumors of Indians wars afterwards kept up a thoroughorganization of the Militia and the Captain of a company was quite a prominent man in his beat and the

aspirant for this position generally encountered strong opposition for other aspirants for militia conformant. In the course of time voting places were established by the state legislature within most of these old company beats for the convenience of the people in general elections, but it was not until the year 1850 that the county was divided into regular election precincts and their boundaries accurately defined. The sixteenth sections were made the basis of these divisions and they were pretty much the same as the bonds of the old company beats and with the exception of the forming of Poplar Ridge precinct out of past of the old Vienna District they remained unchanged up to the close of the civil war. But the large increase of population in the counties of North Alabama soon made it a great inconvenience to the people to cast their votes at the county sites and the legislature of 1819 established other voting places in the counties. There were six voting places established that year in the county of Madison. One at Brazelton's in the Big Cove one at major John Griffins one at Major Cottrels one at Hillsboro and one at Captain Leonards. In the year 1821 voting places were established at the house of Mr. Farley where Abraham Lewis formerly lived, on the road from Burress store to Huntsville one at Captain Jacob's at Dittoks landing and one at the house of Drury Connally at Meridianville. There were then at this time eleven voting places in the County including Huntsville and Mortons Mill and they were distributed at convenient points throughout the County. These voting places had no reference to the County beats but were entirely separate and independent of them They were established as a convenience to the county for the legislature and for county officers. In voting for state officers and for presidential elections they voted any where in the state and for members of Congress any where in their congressional districts at the county site the polls were opened at twelve o'clock and closed at four on the day following, but in the other election precincts the polls were kept open for one day only and were counted on the next day following. The election

of Justicesand Constables were for many years held at the Muster Ground of the different companies under the supervision of the Captains and when a vacancy occured they were authorized to order and hold an election to supply the same. Men of the present time know nothing of the old Muster days that were so full of interest to their fathers and the olf battalion and regimental muster grounds of sixty years ago are hallowed localities. The battalion muster in the spring or summer and the regimental muster in Autumn were looked forward as occasions of reunion where old associates living in different parts of the County were wont to meet and discuss the news since they met at the last muster a year before. There after the drill was over feuds of long standing were settled or championship of the ring determined in a square stand up fight. Whiskey flowed freely the proverbial gingerbread peddler erected his stand sold unlimited quanities of old fashioned molasses gingerbread to the hungry army. The Mayor or Brigadier General in his brave new uniform with three cornered hat and dangling plume revived the troops on his prancing steed, escorted by the best mounted of the citizen soldiery. There was where the ever alert and supple jointed candidates most resorted and when he belonged to another command he took advantage of his unfortunate competitors who were subject to military duty and marched meekly among the rank and file by fascinating the fathers of the regiment by tale and anecdotedand generous proffer of his whiskey flask to those of his audience who were habitually thirsty in temperment. The eighth day of January, the fourth day of July and Muster day were the red letter days of the period. The anniversary of the battle of New Orleans was for a long period of years commemorated by some. Military display the Fourth of July by an old fashioned barbecue and a patriotic speech full of Bunker Hill and Lexington and Saratoga and stars and stripes, but Muster day aside from the drill which many shirked on various pretenses was a time of unrestricted and unconventional mingling togother of the great body of the people where every one gave his entire facultios to the enjoyment of the occasion. I have said that the Captains were prominent men among their neighbors so much so that as a rule if

a man has a grain concealed or showed an outcrop of vanity his neighbors took care not to elect him Captain lest he should spoil and become offinsive to the communnity usualy these old cattains were young men of estimable character who by their gallant and chivalric bearing won the good will and the suffrages of their neighbors among the Captain who flourished on these days were Captain William Jacobs of Whitesburg and Captain Mr. Kirkland of Madison Cross Roads the later of whom was a soldier of the war of 181? and the last surviver of his military colleagues about the year 1826 the appertainece of road hands were appointed from each Captain beat and for the first time there is a full list of these officers. It is hard to locate these beats, and the old muster grounds.As few now live to remember them but these old captains names are still familiar to the people of our county. About the date above mentioned there were some thirteen or fourteen C aptains beats in the County. There were Captain John Williams beat at New Market, Capt. Pitman Peters near old Hillsboro Captain J. J. Summers near Mayesville. Capt Jacobs and afterwards Capt. John B. Turner near Whitesburgh. Capt. Jason L Jordan near Lanier's. John T. Harris in Drake's cove Capt Mr. Sutton and Capt Jonathon Collier in the Vienna a Colliers County. Capt James Johnston north of madison, Capt John McDonglas on Mountain Fork, Capt. George Kelly near Hayes Store, Capt. Lucas at Triana, Capt Fred Elgin at Huntsville and Capt. R. C/ Howlett near Scotts Mills at Brownsboro. The last mentioned was a brother of Col. Thomas H. and J. R. F. Howlett and A, M. Howlett. He as a promising and popular young man and died quite young and without leaving any family. These old military grounds were seldom changed and some of them were unchanged up to the beginning of the Civil war. The old election places at Cluttsville, Cross Road Meridian and in their position. When Madison was built the voting place was moved thither from McElhaney's where it had been located since the settlement of that part of the county. Our ancestors took great interest and generally the voting strength of the county was polled in all general elections .

From the year 1823 to 1830 there was but few interesting events transpiring with in our County limits. Our County still retained its prominence in state and National politics and it is a remarkable fact that Madison County furnished a United States Senator from the year 1819 to the war with the exception of the term from 1841 to 1843 when Dixon W. Lewis and Arthur P. Bagley both from middle and souther Alabama were in the senate and the loss of Madison of Senator for that term in the defeat of Dr. David Moore was on account of local issues that lost him some democratic votes in his own part of the state. The following is a list of our Senators John W. Walker from 1819 to 1822, William Kelley from 1822 to 1825, Henry Chambers 1825 to 1826, John McKirby 1826 to 1831, Gabriel Moore 1831 to 1837, C. C. Clay from 1837 to 1842, Jere Clemens from 1849 to 1853, and C. C. Clay from 1853 to 1861. During the period from 1823 to 1825 Henry King, James W. Camp, Harry I Thornton, Mr. Brandon, Mr. Acklen Jr., David Bradford, Mr. H. Moose and James Plush had served in the legislature with members heretofore mentioned as being elected from year to year as their colleagues. Thomas Miller was in the state senate from 1825 to 1828 and John Vining was at state senator from 1829 to 1835 when William Fleming brought the men from the "Tall Timbers" to the rescue and succeeded him in appointments of representatives from 1819 to 1830 had reduced the representatives of Madison from eight down to four at which time latter Henry King, James Penn, David Moose and Mr. Acklin were our representatives, and able representation. James Penn was a representative for several years and bore an enviable reputation among our people but his chief reputation was in the Masonic Fraternity where as Grand Lecturer and Grand Master of the lodge of the state he is still considered a great landmark of the order. William Acklin the junior representative was then quite a young man and an eloquent speaker and an able and rising lawyer. He was many years solicitor of this judicial district but unfortunately for him he encount red the redoubtable W.R.W. Cobb in a congressional contest in 1847 and sustained a signal defeat after which as there was no more openings for congress.

except for Cobb, he terminated his political life by a two years term in the Senate from 1853 to 1855. Col. Acklen was a descendant of John Hunt the founder of Huntsville and died in Huntsville in the year of 1872. Surviving nearly all of his old colleagues in the State Legislature of which he was for several years a member.

In alluding to the land sales of 1830 an exclusive restriction to my subject would embrace the part of that transaction belonging to Madison County only. But of the participants of the events of that memorable time are scattered far and wide over the South and West and many who originally made purchases in other Counties now have representatives among Citizens of the County and I think an account of the transaction in the Huntsville land district may be interesting to many. At the Land Sales of 1809 there was no land offered except the triangular tract known as the Cherokee purchase containing three hundred and twenty two square miles. This sale was at Nashville but the land office was removed to Huntsville in the year 1811 and until the cessions made by the Creeks it was the only land office in North Alabama. The land sales of 1818 embraced all the Tennessee Valley west of Madison County, save a few reservations. The land sales of 1830 included the lands ceded by the Cherokees in different treaties made from the year 1817 to 1828 and embraced the greater portion of the lands from the Cherokee line on Western Boundary of New Madison to the Georgia line and Southern to the Creek Lands. The greater portion of these lands were similar in character to the New Madison Territory and like New Madison was settled by a large portion of white settlers on small farms. The limits of the Huntsville land didtrict were as follows.

History of Madison County
1840 to 1865

I propose to review the remarkable communication of one of the people published here in the Athens Courrier of May 6th. In this article Judge Richardson is assailed for participation in a meeting at Athens which was guilty of the

unpardonable crime of recommending Joseph C. Bradley for provisional governor of the State of Alabama and the writer of this article takes the remarkable position that no man should be considered worthy of compliance by the democratic party who was a participant in such a meeting. He also makes the unwarrented assertion that the object of this meeting was to disfranchise the white people of the state and throw the fattest officers of the state into the hands of our enemies. In the first place this meeting was not a nefarious because there were many meetings of a similar character in the state in which leading democrats in the state took part and though there was a difference of opinion in the democratic party as to the proper course to be pursued under the circumstances yet even in the day of political excitement the penalty of no democrat was assailed on account of his views on the political situation. The probability was that the state would remain under military rule for an indefinite period of time, the white people were already disfranchised and the only hope of our people for the restoration of civil government was by the assistance of men who had some influence with the republican party. That had full and absolute controll of the federal government. "One of the people in his desire to do justice to others has been guilty of gross injustice to Col. Bradley/ He is assailed as the enemy of his county and the emissary of the republican party in the work of destroying popular government in the south.

In this the writer shows profound ignorance as to the relations of Col. Bradley to our people and of the true state of affairs in our state in the year 1867. Col. Bradley had been an ardent Union man before the war but when recession was an accomplished fact and war was onevitable no man sustained more heartily or contributed more liberally than he to the southern cause. He afterwards became satisfied that the struggle was hopeless and with the decision of character so characteristic of the man he then gave his influence to the restoration of the union and he so conducted himself that at the close of the war he had obtained for a native southern man considerable influence with the party in power.

This influence was used not for the purpose of tearing down our state institution and oppressive confederate soldiers but for the end of resisting civil government and protecting the lives and property of our citizens who were marked out for vengance by a victorious and exasperated people and there is no doubt that if our people had beeNallowed to choose between the military despotism to which we were then subjected and the selection of Col. Bradley that the democratic party in North Alabama would have been solid in his support and if Judge Richardson did take part in that remarkable meeting there is no doubt that it reflected the sentiments of a majority of the democratic party of this state as the party afterword adopted the policy of accepting the constitutional amendments and the opposition to this cause resulted in nothing but a useless waste of time in organizing our state government "One of the people" grows eloquent in depicting the evils resulting from the appointment of Judge Richardson and lays all our political calamities at the door of Governor Houston. He gives a glowin account of a memorable political conflict for the control of the county between Col. Bradley and Col. Lowe that never occured. He wilfully misrepresents the position of Col. Bradley and highly eulogizes Col. Lowe whom while living he was doubtless ready to assail and misrepresent as he now assails and misrepresents Judge Richardson and asserts that Col. Lowe had saved the party in our district and proceeds to condemn his departure from the democratic party, on the plea that no longer hoping for recognition from the democratic party that it became a meat and bread question with him and that he went over to the independent party to keep the wolf from his door. Heaven porserve Col. Lowe from such friends. The people of Madison County are well acquainted with the political history of the countyand will I am sure bear evidence to the truth of the plain tale with which I propose to put down this new Galstopp, this man in buckram. The history of the constitutional amendments the final concurrence in them, the passage of the ordinance by the white democrats of the state for the ability of slavery the fradulent adoption of the constitutence of 1868 and the institution of carpet bag government in the state by the votes of the newly enfranchised negroes and the

reprisal of the qualified votes to vote for County officers are matters of too recent occurrence to require repetition. Now as to Col. Bradley and Col. Lowe, Col. Bradley was never a leader in the old Carpet rule and was recognized by them only as a valuable auxiliary who could assist them in dividing the democratic party on account of his popularity and influence with the native white democrats. He had but little sympathy with the extreme measures resorted to by that party in reconstructing the south and by this difference in opinion he voluntarily relinquished the position that would have been accorded him as their party leader in the states. Holding the office of county commissioner under the reconstruction act of 1868 he so used his influence among the colored element placed on the board as to induce them to resign and to obtain the appointment of competent white men in their stead. In the year 1871 he was a candidate for re-election. Col. Lowe and other members of the democratic state executive committee had submitted a plan for the reorganization of the party which since the war had been not dead but sleeping, and conventions were held in most of the counties where the negroes and carpet baggers were able to contest the supremacy and a straight out fight made for county officers. In this contest in Madison the Democrats though fighting at a disadvantage elected their whole ticket by a small majority except two commissioners who were beaten by Col. Bradley and Docksen Cobly. In some precincts where the vote was nearly solid for the democratic ticket except commissioner Col. Bradley received a majority of the democratic votes and was elected by a considerable majority. There was no political contest, it being an off year and Col. Lowe took no part in the contest for or against Col. Bradley who by an enginering of political issues by his friends and by an effective canvass was elected. In 1874 he was a candidate for a re-election, political lines were drawn closer because both civil and political issues were before the people and it was a struggle under the able leadership of George Houston for control of the state, Col. Lowe for some unexplained reason was not a prominent acter in this canvass in Madison County. It may have been that he was taking part in the

state canvass in other counties but my recollection is that he was not for some time in the canvass but in this campaign. Judge Richardson first took a prominent part in a political campaign coming here in 1868 young, poor and crippled. It had been a neat and broad transaction with him and by a close and diligent prosecution of the legal profession he had established a lucrative practice and had for the first time an opportunity of turning his attention to politics. Even then he was a popular and effective stump speaker and a more actual canvass than either Col. Bradley or Col. Lowe though at that time the probability of his holding an office was very remote as he had never shown any disposition to seek office and his acquaintance in the county was limited. In this canvass, Col. Bradley's course as the financial leader of the board of County Commissioners was severely criticised but yet his influence was so strong among the democrats that while the democrats were sanguine of the election of their ticket yet the election of Col. Bradley appeared extremely probable and one week before the election Robt. W. Collart furnished Col. Lowe with the statistics of the administration of the finances of the county for the past three years and prevailed on him to take the stump against Col. Bradley and he ventilated the record of the board of Commissioners in speeches made from Collier's store to Vienna and if the report was true that Col. Bradley had any support in that county before the relentless logic of Col. Lowe's speeches and Col. Bradley was defeated by a close majority. The leader in this contest was not C ol. Lowe but Robert S. Spragins our candidate for Probate Judge whose high reputation and wide popularity made him a tower of strength and ifhis health had not failed before the election and virtually retired him from the canvass, our victory would have doubtless been complete. This contest in which Col. Lowe has been eulogized as the knight of the white plume who routed the opposition under the leadership of Col. Bradley was a straight up fight between the best men of both parties, Harrison and Bone and Murphey being the one leader of the opposition and Spragins and Delaney and George P. Beirne and Curley and others of the flower of our party upholding the

democratic standard. In the contest for County Officers it was a battle of giants and resulted in a partial advantage to the democracy dearly obtained our party losing the office of Sheriff, Tax Collector and one or two County Commissioners in the fight. Time dispels many delusions and it is time in the interest of truth that the fact taken by Col. Lowe in this campaign was more personal than political and was a mere skirmish that would have soon been forgotten had it not been followed by events that brought it into prominence. Right here I would say that there has always been an independent element in Madison County and in the contention and desire for office nothing but a patriotic desire to promote the common weal has enabled the party so far to control the County. But the only method by which any party can be successful is by the exercises of a wide toleration of the Independent element and giving them a cordial reception when they are willing to fight side by side with us for the vindication of principle. Our people asserted their independence by giving Sheffield over twelve hundred majority in 1874 when our state ticket carried the county and by following Lowe out of the party and giving him a large majority in 1878. I do not propose for a purpose too transparent for concealment to indulge in any fulsome eulogium of Col. Lowe but intend to state the truth as near as I can recollect it. Col. Lowe was a democratic and so recognized, he had been a member of the legislature, a candidate for Lieut. Governor, a member of the state executive committee and enjoyed the full confidence of his party when the lamented Spragins died he was a candidate for Probate Judge and was recommended by a large majority of a meeting of the executive committee. Judge Richardsen was not before this committee as a candidate but preferred presentation of his claim by petition and in support of his claim sent down petitions signed by nearly eleven hundred citizens of the County, among whom were a large number of members of the bar, prominent business men and politicians. Gov. Houston a wise and sagacious observer of character was intimately acquainted with both men and doubtless was satisfied that the appointment of Judge Richardson was in the interest of the county. In truth many warm friends of Col. Lowe had grave doubts whether his qualifications were of a character adapted to the office of Probate Judge.

Judge Richardson was appointed, and considerable hostility to him engendered on that account among the adherrents of Col. Lowe and it was openly asserted that whenever the people had an opportunity they would repudiate the appointment. Nearly ten years have elapsed since his appointment. He outlived all prejudice, was reelected over an experienced and popular opponent by an overwhelming majority and the people recognized him to day as their able and trusty popular leader, and acknowledge that the lapse of time has fully vendicated the wisdom of Gov. Houston's selection. Instead of making a possible mistake as a many from another county puts it, Gov. Houston by giving us such a leader in a time of difficulty placed success in our reach and in 1880 for the first time since the war the democrats elected their entire ticket from commissioner to Probate Judge. Does any reasonable man assert that with such a record that there is any presumption in such a man though he marched and fell, wounded and disable in the ranks in a seat in congress, even against so distinguished a man as Lieut. Gen. Wheeler, Judge Richardson has not seen proper to make any defence because none is necessary because if it is necessary to defend his cause in endeavoring to establish civil law, nine tenths of our party who stood in line with him in 1867 on the cause to be pursued will be put upon their defence and will be denounced as unworthy of confidence for their votes beginning with the election of D. C. Humphrey to the legislature from our county in 1865 and ending in the endorsement of the nomination of Horace Greee in 1872 covering a space of seven and if men now cooperating with the party who have seen proper to vote for Sheffield Lowe and others are to be ostericized nearly all of the remaining one tenth will have to rise and ask pardon of the corporals guard remaining now as to Col. Lowe's political career offer the appointment of Judge Richardson, Probate Judge. He was a prominet member of the constitutional convention and our County's favorite for Congress in 1870. He had a clear majority and could not be elected on accountof the persistent oppositionof some of the western counties controlling over one third of the vote of the convention. Madison and Jackson Counties stood by him to the last and to these counties the plain alternative was presented of either abandering Col. Lowe or breaking up the convention and Col. Lowe solved

the difficulty by withdrawing from the contest and allowing the nomination of Col. Garth. In 1878 Col. Lowe before the holding of the congressional convention decided not to contest Garth's claim to a nomination but to go before the people as an independent candidate. Col. Lowe was fully conscious of his own intellectual ability and of his wonderful influence with the masses. He was a very ambitious man and his clear estimate of his power had taught him that his natural field was in national politics. His dream was to be leader of a powerful political party in the state that would hold the balance between the democratic and republicans and open to him the road to political preferment leading finally to a seat in the United States Senate or even higher still and to a man of his ambition talent for successful party manipulation and wonderful political sagacity nothing was impossible. In the meridian of success and while busily planning for a promising future he was, suddenly cut off by consumption. He was a foe whose agressive methods naturally made him enemies a political contest with him was war to the knife and the rank and file of our party politically detested him and fiercly. And annoyed him but never until the communication of one of the people to the Athens Courier ever so degraded him in a false and hypocritical eulogia as to say that it was done as a meat and bread transaction and from a sense of the enjustic done him by the democratic party. We, his enemies who fought him in life and who are willing to now leave him in peace gave him credit He was profoundly versed in all the entrigue and trickery of parties and accepted the consquences with stoecal resignation and was not either soured or disappointed. He recognized no such thing as a meat and bread question, was careless in money matters and always felt able to take care of himself. His real motive was the overwhelming desire for a field for his talent and when his keen sagacity saw the coveted opportunity his desire for distinction was stronger than his faith to his party and that was all of the matter, and any sentimentalism or hypocrisy in condeming or apologizing for his course is mere twaddle.Col. Lowe while living was able to take care of himself and when dead his friends do not ask his enemies to pretend to polliate or excuse his course.

When a man has reached middle age and has outlived the delusive hopes of early years and has learned to place a proper estimate on the follies and varities of worldly pursuits the recollection of his childhood and youth become more vivid and he begins to realize that whatever amount of toil and privation may have attended his earlier years that his youthful days were the happiest of his life. This is more especially true of one born and raised in the country who by various turns of fortune's wheel finds himself a resident of our town's and cities either driven there by stern necessity or wafted thither on the full tide of prosperity while there is a variety of causes that turns the young men bred in the country towards the city and the cities and towns are full of progress and development infused into them from the energy and industry of the conservative element drawn into them from the farming population seeking a broader field of development, yet this element of the residents of towns never become completely assimilar and although the pressure of business may hopelessly confine them to the crowded thoroughfares and restless progress of the city yet there is in the hearts of them all a lingering hope that the day will finally come for them to return to their native fields and renew in the decline of life the rural pleasures of early life. These hopes are generally as delusive as the anticipation of a successful and prosperous career that tempts the farmer boy to sever the ties of home and family and enter into the battle of life, by casting his lot among the dwellers of cities and towns. After a lapse of twenty, thirty or forty years the now prosperous merchant famous politician or successful lawyer finds leisure to return to the home of his childhood, Father and Mother and their whole contemporary generation have passed away and are sleeping their last sleep in the cemetary near the old church.

Here and there remains a survivor of a departed race. He joins the throng of worshippers on their way to the old familiar meeting house and as he looks upon the entering congregation he labors under a momentary delusion that the dial of time has been set back for forty years and he is a careless boy once more. But the boys of the olden time whom he remembers so well are not there. They are represented

by a few old and middle aged men who are patriarchs of the communnity but the greater number of the friends of his youth have disappeared forever. He reads the names of many of them on the head stones in the neighborily cemetary he can recall alas so many who lie on nameless and promiscious graves on the distant battle fields of the south here and there he recalls one who has made a name in distant state and of another whose life has been a failure and a reproach to his name and nativity. His old sweethearts have become the mothers and grandmothers of the congregation and although he may have mingled among the loveliest of the sex in the brilliant society of the cities, yet he is more impressed by the rosy beauty of this congregation of the daughters of the friends of his childhood because it is almost a living reproduction of the type of forty years ago that he then thought was an assemblage of the loveliest of created beings and this impression having never been eradicated again controls his mind and allows no other standard of comparison but that ideal of his childhood and youth. The changes and metamorphases of cities that make a city man in the cause of a few years feel like he has come into a strange and foreign land do not occur to so great an extent in the country where there is a conservation that retains a large proportion of the habits and appearance of a former generation. While the churches in the towns and cities have under strange transformations, so strange that one can scarcely realize that it's members profess the doctrines and creeds of their fathers. The churches in the country away from the lines of travel have undergone but little change and when we can find one with an old pastor who was preaching to the same congregation that he had in charge when we were boys we can relize the intense spirituality the sincerity and earnestness of the gospel that made this a christian country and we can recognize the insufficiency of the polished utterances of the fashionable pulpit orators of today in reaching the sympathies of their skeptical listless and formal congregations. These old preachers may have once been illiterate and uninformed, they may have never had an opportunity of hearing any of the celebrated dovines of the age but with as steadfast a conviction as the apostles of old that they were called to preach the gospel and believing that in the study of the bible and praying for light and

guidance is inddpendent of all wordly accessary to knowledge is the true source of spiritual power many of them became celebrated and although often eccentric in manner and with no grace or polish in gesture or delivery, yet if the eloquent spiritual passages and original sparkling expositions of the religion of the bible in which their discussions abound could be collated and published it would be inferior to nothing ever given to the world except the work of inspiration. Mingled with a large amount of personal and local matter usual in the sermons of those whose thoughts and affections have been for half a century centered in his little world are occasional gems of thought and doctrine that begot an overwhelming desire to preserve and perpetuate. To the earnest and zealous pastors of the day a visit to those old time churches would be pleasant and profitable, pleasant to realize the advantages civilization has brought, and profitable as a living illustration of the manner of worship of our fathers.

Ever man whatever his station in life, if he spent his childhood in the country has stored away in memor y an Arcadia nestling far away from the jostling city thoroughfares among the green fields or fertile valleys of his nativity. He may become satiated with the empty pursuits and honor and vain delusion of a disappointed career that has satisfied every desire except for happiness yet this Arcadia colored by the romance of early memories and hopes is the one oasis in the sterile desert of the past. When worn with cares and anixioty a stroll into this Arcadia renew his youth strengthens his confidence elevates his power and better nature and extends and widens his charity for the vices and frailities of humanity. As he wanders among the scenes of his childhoods every mountain and brook and valley recalls the almost forgotten past. With impartial mind he reviews his own follies his past sins of omission and commission his blunders and inconsistencies and is humbled and chastened by the thought of how utterly he has failed to fulfil the hopes and expectations of his aimes and aspirations in life. As he rests at the foot of some noble forest oak that nearly half a century has not changed and looks forth at the distant mountains and streams a grand panorama indelebly stamped on his memory he is forcibly impressed with a consciousness of the transitory nature of

human life. In a few short years he will pass away to mingle with his Kindred dust and will be soon forgotten while the noble oak towering above him lost probably for centuries and future generations will rest beneath its shade and look forth upon the mountain cliffs thatathousand years may not visibly change. All nature bears the imprint of stability while man, the noblest work and the crowning monument of creative wisdom comes forth and is cut down in the meridian of his strength. Over yonder in the little country cemetery near the old fashioned church his forefathers sleep. He pensively approaches the little city of the dead and enters the silent enclosure. There his father or mother perhaps his brothers and sisters slumber in their quiet graves. Plain simple headstones mark some of their graves but the lapse of time has swept away the last vestiges of the resting place of others and he can with defference mark the spot where in the long bygone years he buried the loved and lost with bitter regrets and sorrowfully left them to the slumber that only the trumpet of the resurrection can disturb, yet to the man of affliction acquainted with grief to the man in the spring tide of a successful and honerable career to the man whose life has been made of disappointment and failure to whom life has been a trouble and burden a stroll into this Arcadia is alike salutary. It is a balm to the sorrowing, a discipline and an admonition to the prosperous man of business full of suggestions of a better life and higher and nobler asperation and to the nopeless and disappointed the last ray of sunshine lighting his gloomy path and painting the way to final rest and hope in the immortality is a hideous farce, a ghastly jest and a solemn tragedy. But as a state of probation for a better state of existance in which man may humbly and prayerfully hope to attain eternal happiness in the unknown future it is full of possibilities for self improvement. And converts man's frail tenure of temperal existence into the pleasing certainty of a picture more lasting than the rockrubber mountain and only bounded by the incomprehensible and mysterious name of eternity it self.

Madison County 1865 to 1868

June and July of 1865 heralded the return of the last of the priseners of war and the final restoration of peace. The county was under absoluto military rule with with mass halls in every town ready to arrest every person who openly expressed any sympathy with the lost cause. Then came the freed man's bureau with its ample coted machinery it's bigotry and intolerance and ignorance of our system of labor ready to hamper the efforts of those who reached home in time to arrange for making a crop and who had really made a start and worked through half a season before they were hauled up before this new power are required to make new and unheard of and impracticable contracts withm the freedmen. Every thing was in confusion and disorder but government was juroshadowed in the order for the election of state and county officers under the auspicies of Lewis D. Parsons provisional governor under the supervision . All persons except those placed under disabilities by the thirteenth amendment who had taken the amnesty oath were allowed to vote and James H. Scruggs was elected Probate Judge. F. B. Curley sherriff, James F. Morrow Tax Collector and Thos. Oliver Tax Collector. The federal authorities saw when to late that they had misteken the character of the men who although conquered in battle yet had the spirit to cast their suffrages from their old companions in army in preference to the partisans off the Federal government and ~~non~~ combatants. Some of the officers were allowed to be installed and some removed while Captain Curley was arrested for the slaying of McCook for which he was no more responsible than any other confederate taking part in a skirmish resulting in the death of Federal officer carried in chains to Nashville and condemned to death, by a military court martial and was saved only through a pardon from president Johnson.

History of Madison County.
1840 to 1850

In the year 1840 the people of Madison County were struggling against the financial depression that pervaded the entire state. Money was very scarce especially gold and silver and nearly all the paper currency in circulation was received

with distrust. The wild scheme of converting the State bank and branches into cotton jobbing establishments and paying the expenses of the State from the profits of cotton speculation had come to grief.

The northeast part of the county has the same characteristics as to inhabitants. Soil and productions as the Hurricane region. The main or Barren Fork of Flint tends southwards and rises in the State of Tennessee, while Briar Fork and Beaver Dam rise in the northwest and flow on eastwardly through a fine farming region.

AUTOBIOGRAPHIC

I was born in Ogethorpe County, Georgia in the year 1801 two miles from Lexington. My father was a native of Virginia and a soldier in the war of Independence. He entered the army in his seventeenth year and was first under fire at the battle of Kurimoth. This battle was fought on one of the hottiest days on record and my father said that after the battle many of the British were found dead on the field without any wound. He came to South Carolina in Light Horse, Harry Lee's command and participated in the many battles and skirmishes ending in the occupation and at the close of the war had risen to the rank of Lieutenant of a cavalry company. He was in the disastrous charge at bridge where owing to misdirection of orders the advance was not supported and out of twenty only five made good their retreat. All the others being killed or captured. As the survivors fought their way back across the bridge a sturdy Briton endeavoring to bar their passage was cut down by a saber stroke across the face. Twenty years afterwards he and my father met at a horse race in Lexington and renewed their acquaintance under more favorable auspices. Coming southward at the close of the revolution, my father settled at Lexington then near the Chickasaw frontier where he married a Miss Jennings a member of a prominent Georgian family and as there was continual ill feeling between the Cherokees and whites a scouting company was organized which my father commanded for over ten years. The Georgians had suffered severely from Indians hostilities and for many years through this tribe bore ostensibly peaceful relations towards the federal government, yet there was a constant [illegible]

fare waged between them and the white pioneers. The Indians stealing and occasionally massacreing and the whites retaliating with tenfold severity. Occasionally horses would be stolen, a house burned and its occupants murdered and taken captive then would follow a sudden raid into the Indian country captives frequently being rescued towns burned and Indians indiscriminately slaughtered. My first recollections are of a double log house near a pine forest a large cleared field adjoining cultivated by negro slaves. In summer a table of pine slabs was set in the yard between the dwelling house and cabin around this near sunset were gathered My six older brothers and my older sister, tall lithe and graceful as a fawn while my mother with her kind loving face sat at the head of the table with my three year old sister at her knees and my baby brother in her arms. My father who then was approaching middle age was frequently absent or was detained by business until we small children had retired to repose. The Indians by this time had been gradually forced back towards the mountains and Lexington was no longer on the frontier. Yet there were scores of old soldiers of the revolution and veterans of the Indian wars in the country. And on the long winter evenings they gather around each others hearths and fight their battles over again. Many were the marvelous tales of peril and adventure and of hardship that we listened to with greedy ears and glowing faces. Our country was a veritable land of plenty the woods were full of game and the rivers of fish and cattle and sheep and swine fairly swarmed in the woods. We very seldom had wheat in bread but we had Indian corn in greatest abundance from where food of endless variety was prepared . I didn't think any cotton was raised but we had linsey and Jeans and every family had its flax wheel and a little patch of flax and then we had plenty of buckskin the never failing resource of the backwoods man. But this country was growing too thickly settled for the typical pioneer and my father belonged to that class so in the year 1806 with his wife and his nine children and about a dozen negroes he loaded up his wagons and pack horses he set his face westward. My father and his two oldest sons rode in front followed by our two wagons with their negro drivers, then came my mother and the two younger children on pack horses followed by negro women

and children some on foot and some horseback while two of my brothers sixteen and eighteen years of age with a trusty negro servant brought up the rear. It seemed to me that we were traveling for a month or months. We traveled about fifteen miles per day over roads not well opened and frequently had to cut timber out of the road to fill up excavations. And camping by the side of swollen streams to await patiently for them to subside. We occasionally passed through or near Indian villages and my father being well up in the Cherokee tongue was hospitably welcomed and entertained. After we got out of Oglethorpe County we saw no more white people until we came to what is now Murfreesboro on Duck River where we found a few white settlers a grist mill in course of erection. We had left Georgia about the first of March and it was now near the first of April. My father had for many years desired to go to the great bend of the Tennessee, so tarrying on Duck River just long enough to lay in a month's supply of bread and salt he turned southward and traveled steadily for about a week. And one fine spring evening we came to Elk River the stream was clear and the adjoining lands fertile and near at hand was a bold clear stream pouring its swift waters into the main stream. We skirted along this stream for near two miles northward, when we came to a low limestone ridge from which the stream rose in the form of a fine bold spray and gushing from the face of the rock. Here we rested for the night our tents were erected near the spring and when I arose next morning a little after sunrise the negroes were dressing a fine venison my father had shot and a large rattlesnake was suspended from the limb of a spreading beech tree near the camp. The day was devoted to an exploration of the country and every one pronounced it a goodly land and on the third morning the sound of the maul and ax and the crash of falling timber arose the schoocover the walls of a log cabin began to arise the ridge pole and poles were put on board river from the heart of white oak covered it, from small logs split in the middle floored it. A chimney way built of split sticks and the white family moved in. The negroes at first slept under the trees, the weather very warm and pleasant. Night was hideous with the wailing of whipperwills,

hooting of owls and screaming of wild cats and howling of wolves. In the morning day was heralded by the song of the mocking birds and thrush, the cawing of crows and the gobbling of wild turkeys in the tall tree tops, all nature was animated and the forests and streams seemed dense by populated with beast and bird, flesh and fowl everything except man. Out family was alone and for months we had no visitors. This region did not appear to have been intruded on even by the savage. The Indians had no traces of settlement in the neighborhood. We had dropped into the midst of an immense hunting ground with nn one to molest or make afraid. We lived from the forest and with an occasional pilgrimage to Murfreesboro the year was passed by our family in a state of complete isolation from the world. A large corn patch has been cleared up and corn was planted in holes dug with a hoe among the stumps and roots and bread was raised in more than sufficient quanitity for the coming season. The Indian corn on these fresh virgin lands grew to a height of twelve or thirteen feet, and produced two or three dozen ears to the stalk. We were a mile from Elk river and the little creek on whose banks we settled still bears the name bestowed on it by my father. We had been located here for a year and were living in the midst of plenty. We had no sickness,During the year we had made enough corn for bread. We had made two huming morjors by burning holes in the ends of two large hickroy blocks and we worked the pestles with sweeps and in this way we obtained very good bread. The woods furnished and endless varity of meats and when winter came we started a sugar camp in the hills where the sugar maples stood thickest and made a considerable guanity of sugar and molasses. We had to bring salt from Nashville. And at the close of the year a road was blazed out all the way and as there was no other wide blazed road no frontiersman could mistake the way. When the next spring opened many new comers found their way to the beautiful and fertile region where we had located and quite a settlement sprang up. This was an agreeable experience after the solitude of thr preceeding year and among the number were some of our own relatives who followed our footsteps from Georgia who received a warm welcome . But in a year or two old hunters began to tell of a country still further south down towards the great Tennessee River. They reported this country

to be of unexampled fertility, well watered by many streams flowing south, clear and sparkling as the Elk itself, and one or two adventurous hunters reported that they followed these streams southward until they had all merged into the one strong clear and rapid little river that they called Flint, and when they came to the junction of the two larger streams they found a well deprived path leading from it through thickets and canebrakes towards the mountains that could be seen in the distance.As night approached they had reached the foot of the mountain and encamped near a spring. Next morning they ascended the mountain which was covered with leaf timber and from a cliff looked down on a vast swampy sequin with water gleaming in the distance. They treaded southward ascending as they went until just before reaching the mountain summit they came to a spring in a dark mountain gorge with waters of icy coldness and skirting the mountain top they followed a sinuous mountain ridge covered with a heavy growth of cedar that shut from their view the surrounding country as they descended they found traces of a beaten path that grew plainer as they still gradually descended. Presently the cedar gave place to a magnificient oak and poplar growth and they knew that they were at the mountains base, yet they found swamps and marshes on either side and on the north side was a long dark ravine at the foot of almost perpendicular cliff and presently a round knoll covered with oak and cedar and rising some thirty or forty feet above the general level and skirting round to its western side they stood on a perpendicular cliff of limestone from the foot of which issued a large stream of water that spread over the swampy country below. Soon there was considerable inquiry concerning the new and wonderful region to which our hunters had pentrated, and my father began to talk of moving further south. We had been living on Elk river now for three or four years and the settlements were gradually extending southward. Some few settlers had pushed southward over into the new land just purchased from the Indians in Mississippi Territory. My father and his boys and negroes had cleared and cultivated some twenty acres mostly in corn and pumpkins, though we had a little flax patch and my mother had a flax wheel or two which was generally kept in motion. By this time a mill fall was built on Elk near the mouth of the little creek

on which my father settled. I have not visited the spot in fifty years and they tell me that there is now a cotton factory near where the mill stood. At the time of which I speak the creek was carried in a race to the highbank of the creek and its waters projected against and over a hot wheel. The building was a mere shed to protect the works and grist from the weather. The works were crude in character and the stones had been quarried from the adjacent mountains on highlands, but still crude though it was in character, yet it supplied the neighborhood. Occasionally were seen the pack horses of settlers from beyond the line in Mississippi Territory and they attracted as much attention from our little community as a traveler from the Antipodes would now command. These tall stalwart men in buckskin clothing were enthusiastic in the praise of the new country beyond the state line, and while a large number of settlers were pouring into the Elk River country, a considerable number of the old pioneers were going further south. One reason for emigration was that Tennessee was a state and was extending its "larate" over its new settlements when in 1806-7 the Indians relinquished the vast triangle to the United States the base of which extended from the highlands and head waters of Elk to the mouth of Elk river and whose apex was one hundred miles southward on Chickasaw Island in Tennessee River there was a heavy emigration southward and a little ~~trouble~~ tocsin began to spring up at Winchester. Many of the pioneers had spent the larger portion of their lives on the frontiers of civilization and laws and regulations of settled communities was somewhat irksome. While they were naturally peaceable and orderly, yet habit had made them fond of old pioneer law that usually had been potient for the preservation of order in their communities and when law was extended over them they generally declined appointments involving administration of the laws and held themselves aloof from the courts. When by traveling a dozen miles they could pass beyond the jurisdiction of state Authority it did not take long for many of them to cross over the state line. By this time a road had been blazed out from the old town of Winchester through the heavy forests to the state line near New Market and this formed part of the great highway westward through Alabama and Mississippi to Natchez the then capital of

Mississippi Territory. The reasons that somewhat retarded emigration induced my father to emigrate further south. The Chickasaws had generally been very friendly to the settlers but the settlers hated the Cherokees and their hatred was fully reciprocated.About this time the air was full of rumors of a general Indian wars and my father who had fought the Cherokees for some twelve or fifteen years felt the old war fire reviving and came down to Alabama in order to be in the view of the battle should hostilities actually commence. So in that spring of the year of 1870 he sold his improvement on Elk river and came southward down the newly cut road until he struck Flint River at old Brownsboro where there was a considerable colony of old friends who had preceded him, and who at that time formed the extreme southern settlement in the county east of the mountains. At this time a considerable little village was forming at Huntsville's big Spring known as the town of Twickingham and my father settled on a high hill north of Brownsboro. A horse path leading from Brownsboro to Huntsville had been made on the south boundary of the section lines from Flint river to Huntsville. The lands had been surveyed the year before and the settlers could follow the newly blazed section lines to the mountain from which to Huntsville a road was blazed out nearby on the line of the present Belle Forte road, but many years passed before a wagon road was opened. All the people living on Flint who drove wagons to town went up the river to the old Winchester road, crossing the river near the factory, then known as Woods Mill. On the west side of the river they skirted round the mountain through the open woods through the Mastin farm and round by the Green Bottom Inn just opened by John Connally a famous sportsman and prominent man in his day. Hortons mill above the three forks and Brown's mill half a mile west of old Brownsboro had not been built and our grinding was done at Huntsville at a mill put up west of town by John and William Badlum. I being one of the younger boys officiated as a mill boy at first accompanied by an older brother or a negro man or boy, but as I grew older I frequently made the trip alone. Men now living in this country can have but little conception of the richness and beauty of the region between Brownsboro and

Huntsville. With the exception of the mountain spur now known as Cedar Ridge and then covered with a thick grove of stately cedars it was one continued grove of magnificient popular interspersed in the lowland with Oak, Walnut and Hickory. It was a case of the survival of the fittest for there was little or no undergrowth and the forest titans had reserved so much space for light and ventilation that where not frustrated by storms. Wagons could be easily driven any where over the woods and in riding through the beautiful open forest a door on the sun could be seen for a quarter of a mile away through the forest avenues. Roads then were not so necessary as at present when the undergrowth prevents driving and frequently riding through the forests. The mountain was rather difficult especially on the eastern side. The path wound among low jagged cliffs of limestone and it took experienced steering at some points to prevent our meal bags from coming in rude contract with the sharp rocks looming up on each side of the trail. At this time but little impression had been made on the unbroken forest east of the mountain, there was a house at the Nichols spring near cedar ridge and some two or three along the base of Monte Sano near the cool sparkling springs on south side of the Moore Plantation. From Huntsville to the mountain top was one unbroken forest with small clearings made south of the road one by Moses Vincent at Underwoods and another near the old Calhoun quarters. There was a few straggling log cabins on the path from Steels corner out as far as the Fleming place and several new houses among the trees from Holmes street down Green Street towards the pike from Steels Corner the road wound round a large pond where the water stayed all summer and which was full of green briars, old stumps and logs to where the ground began to rise into a considerable known where the Court House stands. Here stood at that time a little frame building used as a Court House and another north of it for a jail which in a year or two were replaced by brick buildings which were a source of wonder to the young natives. A trip to Huntsville's Mill was a great holiday for the boys, as sometimes a dozen or more would come along together. In the crowd was generally some older person who could put up rocks for unfortunate boys who were dragged off

by the rocks or saplings and needles and thread also were forthcoming for repairs in case of damage. We generally started at sunrise or before and reached our destination in two or three hours and as we tarried until all had obtained their grist we reached home near night fall, thus we managed to spend the greater part of the day in town and no exposition of the present civilized period ever delighted our souls as did the wonders of the new and growing little city. We wandered round the spring cliff and waded in the wide and sluggish waters in the swamp below. Some body had started a tanyard just below the spring at the foot of the hill and the making of leather was a new revelation to us. Then came the brick yard and brick laying and the carpenters and masons at work and there was also a cotton gin run by Dr. Moore and a distillery above the mill owned by James Clemons, as evening approached we set out in time to reach home beofore night fall and turning around the cedar ridge and circling round the point we would frequently hear the scream of the catamounts that infested the rough and honey combed rocks covering the upper ridge and listened to many blood curdling stories of adventurous hunters, who had encountered wild beasts in their wild and difficult lairs up in the black cedar groves.

In the year 1810 and 1811 there was but little increase in the population of the Flint River colony. There were rumors of Indian wars and the little triangle which had projected itself beyond the state line about twenty or forty miles along its northern limit and tapered into a point at Chickasaw Island on Tennessee River would have been in serious danger surrounded on all sides by two such powerful and war like tribes, as the Cherokees and Chickasaws. But fortunately both of these tribes remained friendly and when hostilities began the seat of war was south of the mountains on the waters of the Coosa and Tallapoosa. Huntsville had grown to a town of seven or eight hundred inhabitants and was driving a profitable trade with the Indians among whom even at that time civilization was advancing. But many who had bought land at the land sales in 1809 delayed bringing their families to new territory at a time when the temper of the Indian tribes was unsettled and war

appeared probable. But the settlers were not easily intimidated by fear of Indian hostilities. A large number of them had come from Georgia and Tennessee where there had been continual hostilities between the races until the beginning of the present century and the rising generation who had heard their fathers fight their battles over again longed for an opportunity to emulate their deeds. But with the year 1811 from some cause then unexplained the apprehension of Indian hostilities seems to have passed away and settlers began pouring into the country east of Flint River out towards Hurricane Creek a large colony of german settlers were locating among whom was Jacob Derrin a wealthy man who bought large bodies of land near the Indian boundary In 1809 James and John Lawler, John Lamberson, Henry Harless and Richard Pockrus and John Pasoum whose descendants scattered over north Alabama and many of where now comprise some of the best citizens of Madison County. John Brown purchased a large track of land near Brownsboro built a mill on Flint river and gave his name to the old village. The old town was laid off into districts and in the year 1812 it was second to Huntsville in population and importance. Its population rapidly increased and it was the head quarters of the Flint river navigation company that at an early day shipped cotton and produce down Flint river. A large settlement soon gathered around the village among whom were the Howard McCartheys, Lambersons, Taylors, Plobeys, Massingales, Browns, Lawlers, Cottons, Scotts, Jordans and Derricks who rapidly cleared and opened for cultivation the fine fertile lands on both sides of Flint river. The settlement extended up Flint River to three forks where Houghtons Mill was erected and where the second voting place in the county was established. Every body lived in log houses of various grades from the humble cabin daubed with clay to the hewed log house with plank doors, shingle roof , the rocks chinked and finished off or pointed with lime. Lumber was all sawn at saw mills by hand and it was a serious task to saw out the planks for a first class dwelling. For the accommodations of my father's large family he built a square log house about twenty feet square with a side room. The floors were made of white ash plank, sawn at

saw pits by hand and covered with chestnut shingles and stood without being recovered for near fifty years. The kitchen and smoke house and negro cabins were rude log cabins daubed with clay and several of them with dirt floors. East of the house was a sluice or lagoon with many springs running with it and some boiling up from its bottom. The water in this lagoon was clear and cold with tuberoses growing in the stream and along its borders. It was always swarming with fish and a haul or two with a seine generally supplied both white and black with an awful supply of fine fish. From this sluice to the river was a body of rich bottom land covered with tall grown trees over topping the heavy cane brake that covered the entire surface. The road from Huntsville skirted the hills and crossed the river half a mile above old Brownsboro and a thick grove of Beech extended down the river on its eastern side. Small game was abundant and occassionally bears and wolves were slain in the river bottoms and catamounts and panthers in the mountains. I and my brothers during these years did not eat much idle bread. My father was at this time careless in his business matters and left his farm to the care of my older brothers and the negroes. These slaves were part of my mother's inheritance from my grandfather's estate who had died and in that day had left a considerable estate. My mother's part consisted of two or three men with their wives and young families and the labor of three or four men and about the same number of boys had to support some thirty in family black and white and to do this, more land had to be cleared. So every spring there was a new ground of several acres to be grubbed and the brush and logs piled and on the cane brake part was planted and cultivated with the hoe alone. The older laborers had to cut the timber and split the rails, the boys drove the oxen hauled rails put up fences and cut cane roots and grubbed with the hoe and mattock. There was but little money in circulation, iron and agriculture implements were scarce and dear and many common tools and implements were made of wood. The soil was wonderfully fertile, the seasons regular and a failure in crops was unknown. Our hogs and cattle kept fat all the year round in the can brakes and a little corn fed to the hogs in the fall made plenty of fine pork for the whole

year. During their winter months there was wild game either fish, flesh or fowl servedat our daily meals with corn bread in abundance and nobody was ever in lack of an abundance of the actual necessaries of life. Sugar and coffee or tea was seldom seen. I do not think there was ever a pound of tea in my father's house and I have frequently heard him say that he never to his recollection ever tasted the beverage. There was a large quanity of good whiskey made in the country and nearly all the heads of families drunk it-habitually, yet there were but few drunkards in the communnity. Nearly every body wore home spun clothing, jeans and linsey and buckskin in winter and cottonand flax, homespun in summer. In an assembly of forty or fifty boys in summer at church or elsewhere you would not find half a dozen wearing shoes or coats until they were seventeen or eighteen, whether at a corn shuck or quilting at church or at a wedding the crowd appeared barefoot x and in shirt sleeves, their shirts washed white as snow and ornamented with copperas colored suspenders fastened before and behind with a large horn or pewter buttons. We wore hats of plated grass or straw in summer and of wool or fur in winter. The hatters trade was a flourishing and any boy could get a good fur hat that would last five or six years who could furnish a hatter with a raccoon or beaver or otter skins , enough to make two hats. In the year 1812 our peaceful communnity was disturbed by rumors of war with the Indians. It was known that there had been some bloody battles fought in the northwest and traders who traveled south of the river among the Cherokees reported that their friendly spirit towards our people had cooled and that emissaries from the northwest had stirred up a feeling of enmity towards the whites, much to the chargrin of Edmund Gunter and other Indian Chiefs in the tribe south of the Tennessee. S ome of these chief's were halfbreeds of great wisdom and foresight who owned large property in land and slaves and were earnestly desirous that their subjects sho ld become civilized and who saw nothing but destruction to their people in a war with the white settlers. While no one doubted the fidelity of the Indian chiefs yet it was very questionable whether their influence could restrain the young men of their tribe from joining a con-

federacy that Tecumseh and his brother was organized to unite the tribes from the Ohio to the Gulf in a general Indian war and many settlers who had bought lands in the new territory delayed removal of their families until the trouble had passed. But General Harrison's successful campaign in the northwest culminating in the hard won victory at Tippecanoe allayed the apprehensions of the whites and confirmed our neighboring tribes in their friendship. But the fact that we were at war with Great Britian aroused the militairy ardor of our people and militairy companies were organized and drilled throughout the settlements and formed the nucleus of the companies that afterward took part in the Creek Campaign.

HUMES ON TURNPIKE BILL SATURDAY OCT. 18'85

Capt Humes in favor of the bill opened with one of his characteristic clear and simple exordiums speaking in general terms of the advantages of improved highways of the plan that he discussed in last campaign and of his fulfilling his pledge by the passage of the turnpike bill which faithfully embodied his views as presented last summer. His election to the legislature he considered as a party endorsement of his bill and asked in the name of consistency and fair play and endorsement of the bill by his party at the ballot box in November. He stated that the incorporation of the trust company was in the course of ordinary legislation and that he asked that his name should appear as a director after consultation with his friends as to its prosperity after any imputation of sinister or corrupt motives in the matter was slanderous and libelous. He stated that the tax of one fourth of one per cent was to free the funds in the trust company's hands by paying the debt for which the money was tied up in order to use it as a basis of credit to float the new bonds. He alluded casually to the toll gate question without openly taking grounds against them as Judge Brickell had done. He insisted that the roads could be built and the debt paid without passing the constitutional limit, but did not go into details. During the greater part of his address he was cool and collected in

manner and temper ate in speech, skillfully avoiding the weak points in his cause and dwelling strongly on the manifold advantages that would follow the passage of the bill and the suicidal folly of allowing personal feeling or political prejudice to interfere in a purely local and financial matter.

Richardson Against

Judge Richardson in opening disclaimed the introduction of personal matter except in defense against such attacks from the other side. Read an agreement introduced by Capt. Hunes relating to extravenous matters in reply to the charge that he (Richardson had sought to divert the attention from the question at issue to personal issues) Insisted that his opponents were dodging the questions involved in the bill, that they said the people were not voting for toll gates when they voted for a law that plainly contained a provision establishing toll gates. They argued and made their figures on the hypothesis that the bonds could be taken up at discretion when the law said they must run thirty years from issuance. They said the commissioners were not obliged to collect one fourth of one per cent for indebtedness with a law on the statute book requiring them to do so. They said the bonds could be taken at five or six per cent when the law said seven andseven it would be, that law levying ¼ per cent was without excuse and the pretext that it was to pay the public debt was simply an evasion of the constitutional to reach the pockets of the people, that the debt was already provided and how it was arranged, he illustrated and exphined that Judge ~~Brickell~~ Brickell's speech was mere sentiment and claptrap, that if it proved any thing at all it was that the condition of our people was too deplorable to admit of any increase in taxation. That the commissioners court would faithfully execute any law on the statute book but had ample authority under present laws to put every cent of surplus money in the County treasury on public roads and would do so. That if the roads were built it would be either toll gates or taxation that would be a

never ending and vexation issue in the future that voting for the bill meant litigation, trouble and high taxation and voting against it meant reasonable taxes ajust equitable workings of all the public roads and the assurance of good highways in a reasonable period of time.

Turnpike Notes Saturday November 18, 1865.

A. S. Fletcher first spoke against the bill, warned the people against the dangers of a bonded debt. Advocated improvements in roads by appropriating our surplus derived from constitutional levy to be used in all parts of the county where most needed until all our public roads were brought up to as high a standard as the ordinary turnpike and to be kept in repair as now enacted by the new road law which givesall the power to our commissioners necessary to give us good roads in a reasonable time, was opposed to the county commissioners at the end of turnpike belonging to corporations and county turnpikes in every direction to pour toll into the three turnpikes radiating from the city. Thought we should pay as we go. That trust companies and syndicates every ready to manipulate our bonds and the fact that Capt. Humes was a member of one of these companies and while this fact was no censure of the purity of his motives in obtaining the act of incorporation for the trust company, yet the fact that it was on the statute book made it a legitimate object of comment and could be alleged as a circumstance to show that in his strong advocacy of the turnpike bill his motives might not be as disinterested as he wished the people to believe.

Judge Brickole in support of the bill deplored that motives, purety and personal should intrude themselves into a question of such vital importance and regretted that Mr. Fletcher had dragged matters into the discussions entirely unconnected with the question and whose only mission was to darken counsel when the interest of our people demanded that this question should be considered in the clear light of reason unobstructed by political or personal prejudice. He regretted the the want of time to discuss the persisting prophecy but hoped to be able to discuss it more fully before the election. He drew ghoomy pictures of present

condition and future prospects of the county and considered that this bill was the first great step to better times as there was nothing so conducial to public prosperity as improved roads. They would revive trade increase our population and wealth by bringing capital to the county and appreciating the value of our lands and he implored the people to make one great stride towards prosperity by voting for the turnpike bill. Forgetting that the old road law is repealed. He severely denounced it as a relic of feudalism from which the turnpike bill would relieve them(In all this he was in error as the public road bill is entirely disconnected with the turnpike act. He appeared to take the position that as to toll gates and other objectives attendants of the bill the commissioners would have power to enforce or not as they saw proper and although they were voting for a bill that provided for toll gates, yet they were not votingfor that or any other part of the bill to which they objected as they could ratify the bill and then strike out. Afterwards any objectionable part by electing commissioners to do their bidding as he considered that after the bonds were out and the roads built the people and the commissioners could manage the roads as they chose without any regard to interference of bond holders or courts, seemed to argue for improved macadamized roads without toll gates instead of the bill on the statute book. His speech was elegant and pathetic in regard to the necessity for improved roads and his handling the objectionable. Features of the law was plausible and engenious but evasive in fullest sense of the term. He seemed the whole time to be on the point of speaking on the question but some how or other never reached it.

To New Orleans

One Thursday April 30th I and Larlie took the 9 O'clock train for Decatur where we were detained until one-fifteen waiting for the Louisiana and Nashville through train for New Orleans. A light rain had set in which cooled the atmosphere and settled the dust. The train came in on time and were soon moving south on our way to our destination. We found the passenger car very shabby looking

and dirty but otherwise the traveling facilities were excellent. The journey of over five hundred miles is made without change of cars in about twenty hours making an average of over twenty five miles including stoppages and the railroads officials very rarely vary from their schedule time on the whole route from Louisville to New Orleans. For the first twenty miles we traveled over a level fertile region but after passing Falkville the country became broken and by an easy ascending grade we gradually reached the summit of the sand mountain plateau and then the road generally ran along the side of a ridge with low ravines and running streams opposite. At first the little streams tended north ward wending their way down picturesque and fertile valleys of Morgan County towards Tennessee river. On the Sand Mountain Plateau some forty miles from Decatur is the New German city of Cullman the county site of a new county and the home of a German Colony that has made this once desolate mountain region blossom like the rose and orchards and vineyards on the sunny mountain slopes imparts a foreign aspect to this wild picturesques region.

Passing Cullman we soon begin to descend through a romantic region seamed with sinuous narrow gulches and ravines tending southward. On one side we see the slopping cuts into the side of the hills out of which the railroad is carved, and we look out on the other side over the tree tops looking down from the car windows we see the rippling water far below. Presently the train rattles across a short trestle and for a moment we look down a narrow wild looking valley tending away to the blue and distant hills and the next moment the hill side and the dark deep little valley have changed side. Next, we thunder through a deep cut on the back bone of a mountain ridge and as a strange sensation that we are being projected into space steals on us we are suddenly curving around another mountain side along the edge of another deep valley. As we travel, the valleys widen and the streams grow wider and wider. We begin to see now and then a seam of coal along the rail road cuts then comes a coal dump and a side track, the streams have widened and deepened until over a high bridge we cross the

Warrior, here over a hundred feet wide running down a channel cut deep into the mountain where the mountain floods make a difference of fifty or sixty feet between high and low water mark yet the river never overflows the strong mountain barriers that guard the waters on their headlong race towards Mobile Bay. Coal is now seen everywhere. In the railroad cuts at the entrances to tunnels and filled on long lines of coal cars that stand ready at the numerous little mining towns. We whirl rapidly Warrior and Cahaba and New Castle coal mines. The white hotels and cottages of Blount Springs Alabamas great summer resort , nested among the hills and surrounded on all sides with a center of coal and iron inexhaustible in quanities and unsurpassed in quality. Now cedar thickets indicate lime formation, the clay is black and sticky, the limestone strata has been tilted to an angle of near forty five degrees and we are entering into a great coal and iron basin with Birmingham the marvelous young city set like a jewel in the centre of the rich circle. Birmingham fifteen years ago a railroad station now moving rapidly to its twenty thousand population with energy capital and enterprise per capita equal to any city on the continent and destined soon to be the great coal and iron metropolis of the south, is pushing its rolling mills, coke furnaces, machine shops and manufactories in every direction, has absorbed old Elyton and is literally swarming with enterprises, prosperous business move from all parts of the union. As night approaches the rain continues to pour down the mists settles along the hill tops while we sped past Helena a thriving mining town Coleca where lime is made in enormous quanities. As we pass through the pine regions we find saw mills at every little station where immense quantities of the long leaved yellow pine is sawn into lumber which is piled along the rail roads ready for transportation. We reach Montgomery after dark and look out on a myriad of ruby colored lights from the higher city that stretches away to the magnificient plateau on which the state house is situated from which is a splindid panorma of the city and of the distant Alabama river winding and twisting convolutions through the black forests. For two or three hours there is a

Huntsville Public Library
Huntsville, Alabama

furious rainstorm, the night wanes full. About midnight the moon rises, the clouds lighten, the rain ceases and we are speeding through a wilderness of mountainous pine forests. The waters begin to gleam here and there to the south. The sand in the railroad cuts looks like banks of snow, and about three o'clock we are gliding along the bay and the city grows upon us until we are running along the bay with the city embursed in moonshine on the other side. As we pass out of the city the now clear sky gradually settles to the east and day light imperceptibly steal upon us. We catch ocassionally glimmers of the waters. South the forests recede inland and we are crossing the inlet making up from the bay and we pass station after station of delightful summer resorts to which thousands come in the sultry summer months for health and pleasure. These little towns facing the open water and fanned by the bracing sea breeze and embowered in groves of live oak, fig and oranges and covered with flowers is to the wearried fever stricken inhabitants of our large southern cities like entering into the Elysian fields. But we speed on and for miles we seem to betraveling through the sea. There is water on every side but the land grows higher, we are running along a levee beyond which we are the space and masts of ennumerable vessels and the broad Mississippi soon comes into view. The houses grow thicker, we are now running along the river with streams stretching from it and we halt at the foot of broad street with a row of heavily laden telegraph polls running along its center. We are at the foot of Canal Street and a walk of two or three hundred yards carries us into the heart of the great city of New Orleans.

The city is full of people, yesterday was Louisiana day and seventy thousand people were in the city. A large number of this great crowd still linger and throng the side walks and crowd the street cars wending steadily to and fro from the exposition grounds. The streets in a great curve of four or five miles on the Southern, eastern and western margins of the city and streets run northwardly from the river through the city with canal street over a hundred feet wide with an avenue of trees in its centre making a great basis meridian background through

the entire city, the great river thoroughfare on which the street cars run are parallel to the river and follow the direction of its curves and extend east and west for miles changing their names on Jackson Street. There are Camp and _____ making together a street entirely through the city. Some six or seven miles long and forming oneof the main street car lines to the exposition. There are many handsome residences and public buildings along this street. The gardens are covered with tropical plants and flowers. The fresh bloom of early spring is even in the city and its floral wealth does not so strike us at it did tourist from more northern regions. Whom a month since forty eight hours travel carried from a rugged winter landscape to balmy skies and tropical flowers but we found the city yards and gardens gorgeous with flowers and tropical plants and an excursion to the fair grounds in the balmy spring air presented a splendid panorama of elegant dwellings and public edifices surrounded with many colored varities of flowers and the air was full of fragrance. The unusual late spring delayed the growth of vegetation and the weather was cool and pleasant. Occassional showers falling had kept down the dust and the drives through the city were very pleasant.

Early in the morning on the 2nd. day of May we walked from our boarding house to the Texas Pacific depot to take the cars for Alexandria. The train started at eight o'clock and there was a large crowd of tourists ready to start home. The cars were crossed over the Mississippi inan immense steam ferry boat and it afforded us a splendid view of the river down to the fair grounds and up to the great curve above the city. We found Algiers a large town west of the river situated in a low flat region with ponds and ditches and many indications of late receeding waters and from the levee the country inclined back to a still longer level where the waters were still over the lands, and appeared every where in the ditches and furrows. For miles the country next to the river was a continuous vegetable garden and back from the river where the water covered the plantations, were vast rice fields covered with the green crop along the surface of the water. The soil is wonderfully fertile and perfectly level, but the river

even at its present stage has the appearance of being higher than the land and the inhabitants must live in a state of fear and insecurity when the river reaches its flood and a break in the levee miles away would submerge the whole country. The railroad is rough and uneven in some places the sinking of the track gives an uncomfortable incline to the coaches and the length of trestle work over the creek swamps and bayous makes the time very slow. It will require many years and a vast amount of work to balance and level the road through this low swampy region. Yet if the day should ever come when dikes and levees protect this country from overflow like Holland is protected it will be the home of an immense population and the finest agricultural region on the continent. But this insecurity from overflow now retains industry and levees in swamps and lagoons a large extent of the richest soil in the valley. The low price of sugar has depressed that industry and we frequently passed large sugar mills surrounded on all sides by large rice plantations. There is a large area of the country in corn but the climate of Louisiana will not produce corn in its perfection like more northern latitudes and it is nota profitable crop. Agriculture is in a languishing condition, last year the cotton crop was very light in some parts almost a failure. And sugar planting so disastrous that capitalists are very nervous about making advances to the sugar and the consequence is that the rice crop will be largely increased in acerage. We find but few towns or villages on this road. We passed in sight of Donaldsville the old capital and could see the Mississippi beyond . This city is in the midst of one of the finest farming regions in the state and is well worthy of a visit, but time did not permit us to do so. Many of the depots are little box like structures near the quarters of some old plantation and afford no comforts or conveniences for the luckless traveler whose business calls him to tarry. After Donaldsville there is no place of special importance. It took us about twelve hours to make the run of one hundred and ninety seven miles to that place, reaching it after sunset. Alexandria is in the heart of the Red River cotton region and until the opening of the cotton lands in the Mississippi valley in Arkansas and Mississippi this

was considered the finest cotton producing soil in the world and except in the localities above name, it is without a rival. The soil is a deep red clay with considerable mixture of dark sand and a bale to the acre is a low average crop on land well cultivated, though many farmers with more care in cultivation annually go far above this estimate. This country has the drawback of insufficient labor of the slave, and extravagence and intolerance of white land owners, yet is presents more real advantages to the industrious white laboring for men than any position. It is not more subject to malaria than any other rich level portion of our country and in the spring and late autumn it has a climate unexcelled in the continent. The summers are long and rather exhausting to the unacclimated but the pine highlands a few miles from the river are mighty healthy. Alexandria is on an Island extending from Cotile twenty five miles up the river to the city formerly the Bayou Rapids on one side and Red River on the other. This Island is from three to five miles wide and is thickly dotted with farmhouses and negroes on river and Bayou along its whole extent and there is no finer body of land in the south. The water is inclined to be trackish and the best source of supply is cisterns that are dug in the tenacious clay soil and lined with a coat of hydraulic cement. To a citizen of the well watered regions of North Alabama or middle and East Tennessee this is a great objection until they grow accustomed to the use of cistern water. The Texas Pacific and the Morgan railroads have greatly added to the prosperity of Alexandria which has in the last ten years nearly doubled its population.

Delegates from Madison County
1866

Huntsville	13	or 26
Meridianville	5	or 10
Hazel Green	5	or 9
Madison Cross Roads	2	or 3
Cluttsville	3	or 6
Madison	5	or 10
Triana	3	or 5
Lanier's	1	or 1
Whitesburgh	6	or 11
Clouds Cove	1	or 2
Owens X Roads	3	or 5
Vienna	4	or 7
Poplar Ridge	3	or 5
Colliers	3	or 6
Curley	3	or 5
Maysville	5	or 9
Hayes Store	4	or 7
New Market	4	or 7
Plevna	1	or 2
Wells	1	or 2
	75	or138

In the Huntsville Democrat two weeks ago it was stated that if the turnpike bill was not passed that the old law requiring ten days work would still be entailed on the laboring classes. This article could not have been intended for deceiving people as the editor of that paper would not intentionally mislead but he probably accepted the

statement from speeches he had heard. It is a fact apparently known to every one except this editor and one or two advocates of the bill that this old law is repealed and a road tax of two dollars per capita which can be paid by four days work levied. This applies to all parties alike within the working limit and is paid by them all no matter what amount they pay on property. The intention of the law is to throw more of this burden on the tax payer and to lighten the burden of the now tax payers. While experience may show defects in this law that may be remidied in the justice, yet it is a great advance in they way of improvement in the road system, as it levies one tenth of one per cent on all property for road purposes. Then the real issue is whether we will vote to ratify a law establishing turnpikes as enacted in the law.

Its advocates would persuade us that our vote would be for the substitute presented by them, but after we had voted for the bill we would probably find a rigid and close construction of its provisions when it came to floating the bonds and securing the interest and the question would then arise as to how we could build and keep up the roads and the only rational method would be to make the people that use the gates keep them up by paying toll as the statute required. The position taken by the opponents of the bill is very plain and simple, they take it that the advocates of the bill have abandoned the turnpike pact of it and contend the question as presented is narrowed down to the vote on an appropriation to improve certain roads in the county and they hold that their opponent thus given are in direct conflict with the law which they wish the people to vote for. They hold that is turnpikes with toll gates or rejection of the entire measure. They do not ~~hold~~ propose to build turnpikes but to improve the public roads by appropriating every cent of surplus within the constitutional limit for that purpose, instead of commencing in the centre and working out they propose that the whole fabric shall be built up together and all parts of the county have an equal benefit. They propose to take worse places first whether they are about Huntsville or in Lelands Cove or Wells and over the county, wherever they amount to ob-

stacles to get the roads, so that people can travel over them in winter which cannot be done now on account of a few bad places scattered along the different roads and which the good name of our county demands should be repaired without delay. By keeping up the good work they say that three or four years will show a marked improvement in the entire road system and in ten years time we will have superior roads in all parts of the county over which the people can travel and haul good loads in comfort and safety and that such a policy once adopted and pervaded in, will improve the roads until they will compare favorably with ordinary turnpikes at a cost that will fall equitably on all our citizens without being oppressive or far censure to any class. I like all other citizens interested in the welfare of our county I have been observing closely the discussion of the road question. While there is no doubt that the bill on which we are to vote is a clear proposition to construct turnpikes yet neither side proposes to vote on the law as laid down in the statute. A turnpike road is a road on which turnpikes or toll gates are established by law and which are made and kept in repair by toll collected from travelers or passengers who use the road the road bill provides for constructing Macadamize roads with turnpikes toll gates or not, less than three miles apart which toll may be collected and is clearly a law for turnpike roads. In discussing this measure the toll gate question was ignored or evaded but the law on the statute book neither ignores nor evades it and we must vote for the law as we find it, but its discussion shows an entire departure from the letter of the law and the substitutes of an entirely different law manufactured to suit the views and meet the objections of the large mass of votes who want improved roads that are not turnpikes but which are free from toll and unobstruction by turnpikes or gates. If I understand the construction of the law given by advocates of the bill neither side is in favor of turnpikes. The law provides for issuing bonds to run for thirty xx years with interest coupons attached and I cannot understand how the court of County Commissioners can legally issue any other kind of bond or how we can retire thirty year bonds in five, ten or fifteen years unless it is done by paying the bond-

holders a heavy premium that would come out of the taxpayers, neither is it likely that the bondholders would make any arrangement save one that would cost us more than the continuance of the interest to the maturity of the bonds. It has been estimated that if commissioners are not compelled to levy the ½ per cent for paying off the public debt in 1939 and thus utilizing the money of the county for a sinking fud to meet our bonds thirty years hence. If this law can be evaded and no tols to be collected what guarantee is there for the payment of the bonds exceptby enforced collection of the entire amount from our peopleat the expiration o the thirty years. With a plain proposition to vote for a straight out turpike bill establishing turnpike roads with provision for toll gates and to be paid for by issuing thirty years bonds all or nearly all of the advocates of thebill tell you that we are merely voting to pay two hundred thousand dollarson bonds that can be taken up at the discretion of the commissioners court toimprove certain roads in the county, nearly all leading into short turnpike rods belonging to chartered corporations on which a man horseback pays one cen per mile going and coming with an increase in population on vehicles. I cannt reconcile the bill as presented in the discussion with the law in the statut book and would be much pleased to learn how we can vote for the statute and hve it enforced according to the construction of its advocates This is a perplexing question to a large number who earnestly desire good Macadamized roads without toll gates and unless they are satisfied that this law will accompolish his they will give no turnpikes the benefit of the doubt by voting against the law. The public advocates of the turnpike bill are sure of much ability and re so warmly interested in the success of the measure that they have in their zeal lost sight of the real question presented, should I vote for the turnpike billI should vote for it as laid down in the law expecting it to be carried out according to its lettor and no argument of the question on any other basis can be fair or consistent as a vote in favor of the law is a ratification of its provision as they stand in the statute.

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